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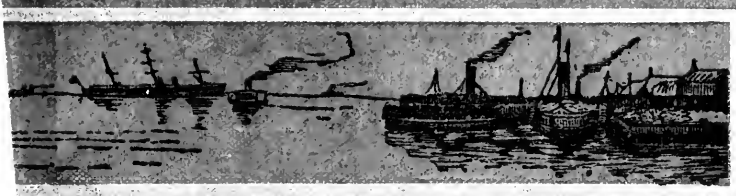

POMONA'S TRAVELS

BY
FRANK R. STOCKTON
ILLUSTRATED
BY
A. B. FROST
PUBLISHED
BY
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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1st Edition
1st Binding

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POMONA'S TRAVELS

A Series of Letters to the Mistress of Rudder Grange from her former Handmaiden

In Uniform Binding

RUDDER GRANGE

Illustrated by A. B. Frost. 12mo, $2.00

POMONA'S TRAVELS

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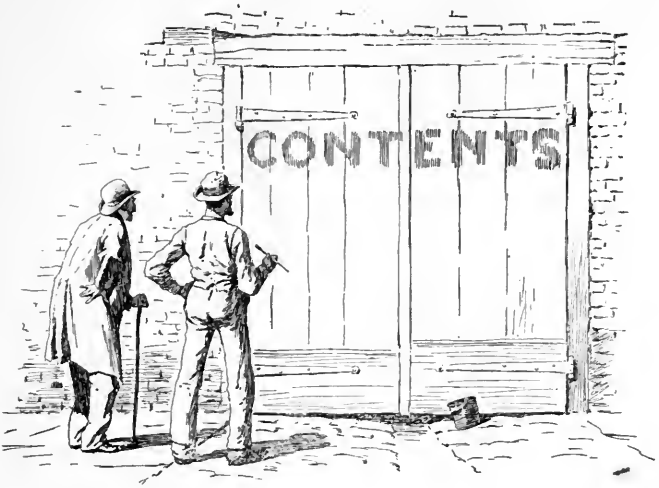

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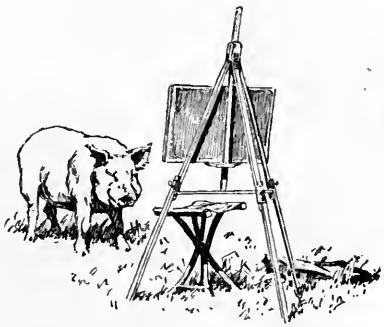


POMONA'S TRAVELS

THIS series of letters, written by Pomona of "Rudder Grange" to her former mistress, Euphemia, may require a few words of introduction. Those who have not read the adventures and experiences of Pomona in "Rudder Grange" should be told that she first appeared in that story as a very young and illiterate girl, fond of sensational romances, and with some out-of-the-way ideas in regard to domestic economy and the conventions of society. This romantic orphan took service in the "Rudder Grange" family, and as the story progressed she grew up into a very estimable young woman, and finally married Jonas, the son of a well-to-do farmer. Even after she came into possession of a husband and a daughter Pomona did not lose her affection for her former employers.

About a year before the beginning of the travels described in these letters Jonas's father died and left a comfortable little property, which placed Pomona and her husband in independent circumstances. The ideas and ambitions of this eccentric but sensible

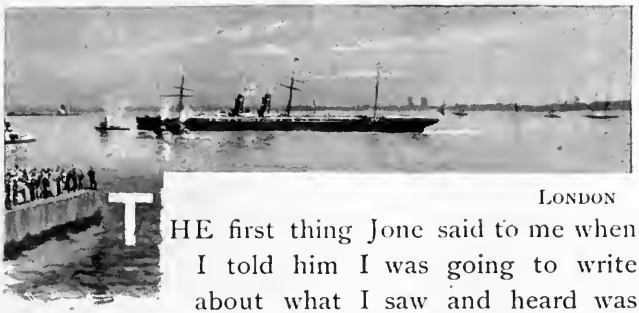
young woman enlarged with her fortune. As her daughter was now going to school, Pomona was seized with the spirit of emulation, and determined as far as was possible to make the child's education an advantage to herself. Some of the books used by the little girl at school were carefully and earnestly studied by her mother, and as Jonas joined with hearty good-will in the labors and pleasures of this system of domestic study, the family standard of education was considerably raised. In the quick-witted and observant Pomona the improvement showed itself principally in her methods of expression, and although she could not be called at the time of these travels an educated woman, she was by no means an ignorant one.

When the daughter was old enough she was allowed to accept an invitation from her grandmother to spend the summer in the country, and Pomona determined that it was the duty of herself and husband to avail themselves of this opportunity for foreign travel.

Accordingly, one fine spring morning, Pomona, still a young woman, and Jonas, not many years older, but imbued with a semi-pathetic complaisance beyond his years, embarked for England and Scotland, to which countries it was determined to limit their travels. The letters which follow were written in consequence of the earnest desire of Euphemia to have a full account of the

travels and foreign impressions of her former handmaiden. Pruned of dates, addresses, signatures, and of many personal and friendly allusions, these letters are here presented as Pomona wrote them to Euphemia.

Letter Number One



LONDON

THE first thing Jone said to me when I told him I was going to write about what I saw and heard was that I must be careful of two things. In the first place, I must not write a lot of stuff that everybody ought to be expected to know, especially people who have travelled themselves; and in the second place, I must not send you my green opinions, but must wait until they were seasoned, so that I can see what they are good for before I send them.

"But if I do that," said I, "I will get tired of them long before they are seasoned, and they will be like a bundle of old sticks that I wouldn't offer to anybody." Jone laughed at that, and said I might as well send them along green, for, after all, I wasn't the kind of a person to keep things until they were seasoned, to see if I liked them. "That's true," said I, "there's a great many things, such as

husbands and apples, that I like a good deal better fresh than dry. Is that all the advice you've got to give?"

"For the present," said he; "but I dare say I shall have a good deal more as we go along."

"All right," said I, "but be careful you don't give me any of it green. Advice is like gooseberries, that's got to be soft and ripe, or else well cooked and sugared, before they're fit to take into anybody's stomach."

Jone was standing at the window of our sitting-room when I said this, looking out into the street. As soon as we got to London we took lodgings in a little street running out of the Strand, for we both want to be in the middle of things as long as we are in this conglomerate town, as Jone calls it. He says, and I think he is about right, that it is made up of half a dozen large cities, ten or twelve towns, at least fifty villages, more than a hundred little settlements, or hamlets, as they call them here, and about a thousand country houses scattered along around the edges; and over and above all these are the inhabitants of a large province, which, there being no province to put them into, are crammed into all the cracks and crevices so as to fill up the town and pack it solid.

When we was in London before, with you and your husband, madam, and we lost my baby in Kensington Gardens, we lived, you know, in a

peaceful, quiet street by a square or crescent, where about half the inhabitants were pervaded with the solemnities of the past and the other half bowed down by the dolefulness of the present, and no way of getting anywhere except by descending into a movable tomb, which is what I always think of when we go anywhere in the underground railway. But here we can walk to lots of things we want to see, and if there was nothing else to keep us lively the fear of being run over would do it, you may be sure.

But, after all, Jone and me didn't come here to London just to see the town. We have ideas far ahead of that. When we was in London before I saw pretty nearly all the sights, for when I've got work like that to do I don't let the grass grow under my feet, and what we want to do on this trip is to see the country part of England and Scotland. And in order to see English country life just as it is, we both agreed that the best thing to do was to take a little house in the country and live there a while; and I'll say here that this is the only plan of the whole journey that Jone gets real enthusiastic about, for he is a domestic man, as you well know, and if anything swells his veins with fervent rapture it is the idea of living in some one place continuous, even if it is only for a month.

As we wanted a house in the country we came to London to get it, for London is the place to get everything. Our landlady advised us, when we told

her what we wanted, to try and get a vicarage in some little village, because, she said, there are always lots of vicars who want to go away for a month in the summer, and they can't do it unless they rent their houses while they are gone. And in fact, some of them, she said, got so little salary for the whole year, and so much rent for their vicarages while they are gone, that they often can't afford to stay in places unless they go away.

So we answered some advertisements, and there was no lack of them in the papers, and three agents came to see us, but we did not seem to have any luck. Each of them had a house to let which ought to have suited us, according to their descriptions, and although we found the prices a good deal higher than we expected, Jone said he wasn't going to be stopped by that, because it was only for a little while and for the sake of experience—and experience, as all the poets, and a good many of the prose writers besides, tell us, is always dear. But after the agents went away, saying they would communicate with us in the morning, we never heard anything more from them, and we had to begin all over again. There was something the matter, Jone and I both agreed on that, but we didn't know what it was. But I waked up in the night and thought about this thing for a whole hour, and in the morning I had an idea.

"Jone," said I, when we was eating breakfast,

"it's as plain as A B C that those agents don't want us for tenants, and it isn't because they think we are not to be trusted, for we'd have to pay in advance, and so their money's safe; it is something else, and I think I know what it is. These London men are very sharp, and used to sizing and sorting all kinds of people as if they was potatoes being got ready for market, and they have seen that we are not what they call over here gentlefolks."

"No lordly airs, eh?" said Jone.

"Oh, I don't mean that," I answered him back; "lordly airs don't go into parsonages, and I don't mean either that they see from our looks or manners that you used to drive horses and milk cows and work in the garden, and that I used to cook and scrub and was maid-of-all-work on a canal-boat; but they do see that we are not the kind of people who are in the habit, in this country, at least, of spending their evenings in the best parlors of vicarages."

"Do you suppose," said Jone, "that they think a vicar's kitchen would suit us better?"

"No," said I, "they wouldn't put us in a vicarage at all; there wouldn't be no place there that would not be either too high or too low for us. It's my opinion that what they think we belong in is a lordly house, where you'd shine most as head butler or a steward, while I'd be the housekeeper or a leading lady's maid."

"By George!" said Jone, getting up from the table, "if any of those fellows would favor me with an opinion like that I'd break his head."

"You'd have a lot of heads to break," said I, "if you went through this country asking for opinions on the subject. It's all very well for us to remember that we've got a house of our own as good as most rectors have over here, and money enough to hire a minor canon, if we needed one in the house; but the people over here don't know that, and it wouldn't make much difference if they did, for it wouldn't matter how nice we lived or what we had so long as they knew we was retired servants."

At this Jone just blazed up and rammed his hands into his pockets and spread his feet wide upon the floor. "Pomona," said he, "I don't mind it in you, but if anybody else was to call me a retired servant I'd——"

"Hold up, Jone," said I, "don't waste good, wholesome anger." Now, I tell you, madam, it really did me good to see Jone blaze up and get red in the face, and I am sure that if he'd get his blood boiling oftener it would be a good thing for his dyspeptic tendencies and what little malaria may be left in his system. "It won't do any good to flare up here," I went on to say to him; "fact's fact, and we was servants, and good ones, too, though I say it myself, and the trouble is we haven't got into the way of altogether for-

getting it, or, at least, acting as if we had forgotten it."

Jone sat down on a chair. "It might help matters a little," he said, "if I knew what you was driving at."

"I mean just this," said I, "as long as we are as anxious not to give trouble, or as careful of people's feelings, as good-mannered to servants, and as polite and good-natured to everybody we have anything to do with, as we both have been since we came here, and as it is our nature to be, I am proud to say, we're bound to be set down, at least by the general run of people over here, as belonging to the pick of the nobility and gentry, or as well-bred servants. It's only those two classes that act as we do, and anybody can see we are not special nobles and gents. Now, if we want to be reckoned anywhere in between these two we've got to change our manners."

"Will you kindly mention just how?" said Jone.

"Yes," said I, "I will. In the first place, we've got to act as if we had always been waited on and had never been satisfied with the way it was done; we've got to let people think that we think we are a good deal better than they are, and what they think about it doesn't make the least difference; and then again we've got to live in better quarters than these, and whatever they may be we must make people

think that we don't think they are quite good enough for us. If we do all that, agents may be willing to let us vicarages."

"It strikes me," said Jone, "that these quarters are good enough for us. I'm comfortable." And then he went on to say, madam, that when you and your husband was in London you was well satisfied with just such lodgings.

"That's all very well," I said, "for they never moved in the lower paths of society, and so they didn't have to make any change, but just went along as they had been used to go. But if we want to make people believe we belong to that class I should choose, if I had my pick out of English social varieties, we've got to bounce about as much above it as we were born below it, so that we can strike somewhere near the proper average."

"And what variety would you pick out, I'd like to know?" said Jone, just a little red in the face, and looking as if I had told him he didn't know timothy hay from oat straw.

"Well," said I, "it is not easy to put it to you exactly, but it's a sort of a cross between a prosperous farmer without children and a poor country gentleman with two sons at college and one in the British army, and no money to pay their debts with."

"That last is not to my liking," said Jone.

"But the farmer part of the cross would make it all right," I said to him, "and it strikes me that a

mixture like that would just suit us while we are staying over here. Now, if you will try to think of yourself as part rich farmer and part poor gentleman, I'll consider myself the wife of the combination,

"Boy, go order me a four-in-hand"

and I am sure we will get along better. We didn't come over here to be looked upon as if we was the bottom of a pie dish and charged as if we was the upper crust. I'm in favor of paying a little more money and getting a lot more respectfulness, and

the way to begin is to give up these lodgings and go to a hotel such as the upper middlers stop at. From what I've heard, the Babylon Hotel is the one for us while we are in London. Nobody will suspect that any of the people at that hotel are retired servants."

This hit Jone hard, as I knew it would, and he jumped up, made three steps across the room, and rang the bell so that the people across the street must have heard it, and up came the boy in green jacket and buttons, with about every other button missing, and I never knew him to come up so quick before.

"Boy," said Jone to him, as if he was hollering to a stubborn ox, "go order me a four-in-hand."

But this letter is so long I must stop for the present.

Letter Number Two

LONDON

WHEN Jone gave the remarkable order mentioned in my last letter I did not correct him, for I wouldn't do that before servants without giving him a chance to do it himself; but before either of us could say another word the boy was gone.

"Mercy on us," I said, "what a stupid blunder! You meant four-wheeler."

The Landlady with an "underdone visage"

"Of course I did," he said; "I was a little mad and got things mixed, but I expect the fellow understood what I meant."

"You ought to have called a hansom any way," I said, "for they are a lot more stylish to go to a hotel in than in a four-wheeler."

"If there was six-wheelers I would have ordered one," said he. "I don't want anybody to have more wheels than we have."

At this moment the landlady came into the room with a sarcastic glimmer on her underdone visage,

and, says she, "I suppose you don't understand about the vehicles we have in London. The four-in-hand is what the quality and coach people use when——" As I looked at Jone I saw his legs tremble, and I know what that means. If I was a wanderin' dog and saw Jone's legs tremble, the only thoughts that would fill my soul would be such as cluster around "Home, Sweet Home." Jone was too much riled by the woman's manner to be willing to let her think he had made a mistake, and he stopped her short. "Look here," he said to her, "I don't ask you to come here to tell me anything about vehicles. When I order any sort of a trap I want it." When I heard Jone say trap my soul lifted itself and I knew there was hope for us. The stiffness melted right out of the landlady, and she began to look soft and gummy.

"If you want to take a drive in a four-in-hand coach, sir," she said, "there's two or three of them starts every morning from Trafalgar Square, and it's not too late now, sir, if you go over there immediate."

"Go?" said Jone, throwing himself into a chair, "I said, order one to come. Where I live that sort of vehicle comes to the door for its passengers."

The woman looked at Jone with a venerative uplifting of her eyebrows. "I can't say, sir, that a coach will come, but I'll send the boy. They go to Dorking, and Seven Oaks, and Virginia Water——"

"I want to go to Virginia Water," said Jone, as quick as lightning.

"Now, then," said I, when the woman had gone, "what are you going to do if the coach comes?"

"Go to Virginia Water in it," said Jone, "and when we come back we can go to the hotel. I made a mistake, but I've got to stand by it or be called a greenhorn."

I was in hopes the four-in-hand wouldn't come, but in less than ten minutes there drove up to our door a four-horse coach which, not having half enough passengers, was glad to come such a little ways to get some more. There was a man in a high hat and red coat, who was blowing a horn as the thing came around the corner, and just as I was looking into the coach and thinking we'd have it all to ourselves, for there was nobody in it, he put a ladder up against the top, and says he, touching his hat, "There's a seat for you, madam, right next the coachman, and one just behind for the gentleman. 'Tain't often that, on a fine morning like this, such seats as them is left vacant on account of a sudden case of croup in a baronet's family."

I looked at the ladder and I looked at that top front seat, and I tell you, madam, I trembled in every pore, but I remembered then that all the respectable seats was on top, and the farther front the nobbier, and as there was a young woman sitting already on the box-seat, I made up my mind

that if she could sit there I could, and that I wasn't going to let Jone or anybody else see that I was frightened by style and fashion, though confronted

"I looked at the ladder and at the top front seat"

by it so sudden and unexpected. So up that ladder I went quick enough, having had practice in hay-mows, and sat myself down between the young woman and the coachman, and when Jone had

tucked himself in behind me the horner blew his horn and away we went.

I tell you, madam, that box-seat was a queer box for me. I felt as though I was sitting on the eaves of a roof with a herd of horses cavoorting under my feet. I never had a bird's-eye view of horses before. Looking down on their squirming bodies, with the coachman almost standing on his tiptoes driving them, was so different from Jone's buggy and our tall gray horse, which in general we look up to, that for a good while I paid no attention to anything but the danger of falling out on top of them. But having made sure that Jone was holding on to my dress from behind, I began to take an interest in the things around me.

Knowing as much as I thought I did about the bigness of London, I found that morning that I never had any idea of what an everlasting town it is. It is like a skein of tangled yarn—there doesn't seem to be any end to it. Going in this way from Nelson's Monument out into the country, it was amazing to see how long it took to get there. We would go out of the busy streets into a quiet rural neighborhood, or what looked like it, and the next thing we knew we'd be in another whirl of omnibuses and cabs, with people and shops everywhere; and we'd go on and through this and then come to another handsome village with country houses, and the street would end in another busy town; and so on until

I began to think there was no real country, at least, in the direction we was going. It is my opinion that if London was put on a pivot and spun round in the State of Texas until it all flew apart, it would spread all over the State and settle up the whole country.

At last we did get away from the houses and began to roll along on the best made road I ever saw, with a hedge on each side and the greenest grass in the fields, and the most beautiful trees, with the very trunks covered with green leaves, and with white sheep and handsome cattle and pretty thatched cottages, and everything in perfect order, looking as if it had just been sprinkled and swept. We had seen English country before, but that was from the windows of a train, and it was very different from this sort of thing, where we went meandering along lanes, for that is what the roads look like, being so narrow.

Just as I was getting my whole soul full of this lovely ruralness, down came a shower of rain without giving the least notice. I gave a jump in my seat as I felt it on me, and began to get ready to get down as soon as the coachman should stop for us all to get inside; but he didn't stop, but just drove along as if the sun was shining and the balmy breezes blowing, and then I looked around and not a soul of the eight people on the top of that coach showed the least sign of expecting to get down and go

"DOWN CAME A SHOWER OF RAIN"

inside. They all sat there just as if nothing was happening, and not one of them even mentioned the rain. But I noticed that each of them had on a mackintosh or some kind of cape, whereas Jone and I never thought of taking anything in the way of waterproof or umbrellas, as it was perfectly clear when we started.

I looked around at Jone, but he sat there with his face as placid as a piece of cheese, looking as if he had no more knowledge it was raining than the two Englishmen on the seat next him. Seeing he wasn't going to let those men think he minded the rain any more than they did, I determined that I wouldn't let the young woman who was sitting by me have any notion that I minded it, and so I sat still, with as cheerful a look as I could screw up, gazing at the trees with as gladsome a countenance as anybody could have with water trickling down her nose, her cheeks dripping, and dewdrops on her very eyelashes, while the dampness of her back was getting more and more perceptible as each second dragged itself along. Jone turned up the hood of my coat, and so let down into the back of my neck what water had collected in it; but I didn't say anything, but set my teeth hard together and fixed my mind on Columbia, happy land, and determined never to say anything about rain until some English person first mentioned it.

But when one of the flowers on my hat leaned

over the brim and exuded bloody drops on the front of my coat I began to weaken, and to think that if there was nothing better to do I might get under one of the seats ; but just then the rain stopped and the sun shone. It was so sudden that it startled me; but not one of those English people mentioned that the rain had stopped and the sun was shining, and so neither did Jone or I. We was feeling mighty moist and unhappy, but we tried to smile as if we was plants in a greenhouse, accustomed to being watered and feeling all the better for it.

I can't write you all about the coach drive, which was very delightful, nor of that beautiful lake they call Virginia Water, and which I know you have a picture of in your house. They tell me it is artificial, but as it was made more than a hundred years ago, it might now be considered natural. We dined at an inn, and when we got back to town, with two more showers on the way, I said to Jone that I thought we'd better go straight to the Babylon Hotel, which we intended to start out for, although it was a long way round to go by Virginia Water, and see about engaging a room; and as Jone agreed I asked the coachman if he would put us down there, knowing that he'd pass near it. He agreed to this, and seemed very glad to stop there, which I suppose would be an advertisement for his coach.

When we got on the street where the Babylon Hotel was he whipped up his horses so that they

went almost on a run, and the horner blew his horn until his eyes seemed bursting, and with a grand sweep and a clank and a jingle we pulled up at the front of the big hotel. Out marched the head porter in a blue uniform, and out ran two under-porters with red coats, and down jumped the horner and put up his ladder, and Jone and I got down, after giving the coachman half-a-crown, and receiving from the passengers a combined gaze of differentialism which had been wholly wanting before. The men in the red coats looked disappointed when they saw we had no baggage, but the great doors was flung open and we went straight up to the clerk's desk.

When we was taken to look at rooms I remembered that there was always danger of Jone's tendency to thankful contentment getting the better of him, and I took the matter in hand myself. Two rooms good enough for anybody was shown us, but I was not going to take the first thing that was offered, no matter what it was. We settled the matter by getting a first-class room, with sofas and writing-desks and everything convenient, for only a little more than we was charged for the other rooms, and the next morning we went there.

When we went back to our lodgings to pack up, and I looked in the glass and saw what a smeary, bedraggled state my hat and head was in, from

being rained on, I said to Jone, "I don't see how those people ever let such a person as me have a room at their hotel."

"It doesn't surprise me a bit," said Jone; "nobody but a very high and mighty person would have dared to go lording it about that hotel with her hat feathers and flowers all plastered down over her head. Most people can be uppish in good clothes, but to look like a scarecrow and be uppish can't be expected except from the truly lofty."

"I hope you are right," I said, and I think he was.

We hadn't been at the Babylon Hotel, where we are now, for more than two days when I said to Jone that this sort of thing wasn't going to do. He looked at me amazed. "What on earth is the matter now?" he said. "Here is a room fit for a royal duke, in a house with marble corridors and palace stairs, and gorgeous smoking-rooms, and a post-office, and a dining-room pretty nigh big enough for a hall of Congress, with waiters enough to make two military companies, and the bills of fare all in French. If there is anything more you want, Pomona——"

"Stop there" said I; "the last thing you mention is the rub. It's the dining-room; it's in that resplendent hall that we've got to give ourselves a social boom or be content to fold our hands and fade away forever."

"Which I don't want to do yet," said Jone, "so speak out your trouble."

"The trouble this time is you," said I, "and your awful meekness. I never did see anybody anywhere as meek as you are in that dining-room. A half-drowned fly put into the sun to dry would

"Ask the waiter what the French words mean"

be overbearing and supercilious compared to you. When you sit down at one of those tables you look as if you was afraid of hurting the chair, and when the waiter gives you the bill of fare you ask him what the French words mean, and then he looks down on you as if he was a superior Jove contemplating a hop-toad, and he tells you

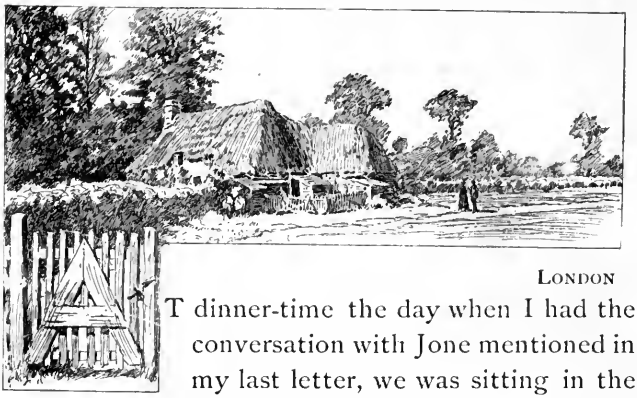
that this one means beef and the other means potatoes, and brings you the things that are easiest to get. And you look as if you was thankful from the bottom of your heart that he is good enough to give you anything at all. All the airs I put on are no good while you are so extra humble. I tell him I don't want this French thing—when I don't know what it is—and he must bring me some of the other—which I never heard of—and when it comes I eat it, no matter what it turns out to be, and try to look as if I was used to it, but generally had it better cooked. But, as I said before, it is of no use—your humbleness is too much for me. In a few days they will be bringing us cold victuals, and recommending that we go outside somewhere and eat them, as all the seats in the dining-room are wanted for other people."

"Well," said Jone, "I must say I do feel a little overshadowed when I go into that dining-room and see those proud and haughty waiters, some of them with silver chains and keys around their necks, showing that they are lords of the wine-cellar, and all of them with an air of lofty scorn for the poor beings who have to sit still and be waited on; but I'll try what I can do. As far as I am able, I'll hold up my end of the social boom."

You may think I break off my letters sudden, madam, like the instalments in a sensation

weekly, which stops short in the most harrowing parts, so as to make certain the reader will buy the next number; but when I've written as much as I think two foreign stamps will carry —for more than fivepence seems extravagant for a letter—I generally stop.

Letter Number Three



LONDON

AT dinner-time the day when I had the conversation with Jone mentioned in my last letter, we was sitting in the dining-room at a little table in a far corner, where we'd never been before. Not being considered of any importance they put us sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, instead of giving us regular seats, as I noticed most of the other people had, and I was looking around to see if anybody was ever coming to wait on us, when suddenly I heard an awful noise.

I have read about the rumblings of earthquakes, and although I never heard any of them, I have felt a shock, and I can imagine the awfulness of the rumbling, and I had a feeling as if the building was about to sway and swing as they do in earth-

quakes. It wasn't all my imagining, for I saw the people at the other tables near us jump, and two waiters who was hurrying past stopped short as if they had been jerked up by a curb bit. I turned to look at Jone, but he was sitting up straight in his

Jone giving an order

chair, as solemn and as steadfast as a gate-post, and I thought to myself that if he hadn't heard anything he must have been struck deaf, and I was just on the point of jumping up and shouting to him, "Fly, before the walls and roof come down upon us!" when that awful noise occurred again. My blood

stood frigid in my veins, and as I started back I saw before me a waiter, his face ashy pale, and his knees bending beneath him. Some people near us were half getting up from their chairs, and I pushed back and looked at Jone again, who had not moved except that his mouth was open. Then I knew what it was that I thought was an earthquake—it was Jone giving an order to the waiter.

I bit my lips and sat silent; the people around kept on looking at us, and the poor man who was receiving the shock stood trembling like a leaf. When the volcanic disturbance, so to speak, was over, the waiter bowed himself, as if he had been a heathen in a temple, and gasping, "Yes, sir, immediate," glided unevenly away. He hadn't waited on us before, and little thought, when he was going to stride proudly pass our table, what a double-loaded Vesuvius was sitting in Jone's chair. I leaned over the table and said to Jone that if he would stick to that we could rent a bishopric if we wanted to, and I was so proud I could have patted him on the back. Well, after that we had no more trouble about being waited on, for that waiter of ours went about as if he had his neck bared for the fatal stroke and Jone was holding the cimeter.

The head waiter came to us before we was done dinner and asked if we had everything we wanted and if that table suited us, because if it did we could always have it. To which Jone distantly thundered

that if he would see that it always had a clean table-cloth it would do well enough.

Even the man who stood at the big table in the middle of the room and carved the cold meats, with his hair parted in the middle, and who looked as if he were saying to himself, as with a bland dexterity and tastefulness he laid each slice upon its plate, "Now, then, the socialistic movement in Paris is arrested for the time being, and here again I put an end to the hopes of Russia getting to the sea through Afghanistan, and now I carefully spread contentment over the minds of all them riotous Welsh miners," even he turned around and bowed to us as we passed him, and once sent a waiter to ask if we'd like a little bit of potted beef, which was particularly good that day.

The Carver

Jone kept up his rumblings, though they sounded more distant and more deep under ground, and one day at luncheon an elderly woman, who was sitting

alone at a table near us, turned to me and spoke. She was a very plain person, with her face all seamed and rough with exposure to the weather, like as if she had been captain to a pilot boat, and with a general appearance of being a cook with good recommendations, but at present out of a place. I might have wondered at such a person being at such a hotel, but remembering what I had been myself I couldn't say what mightn't happen to other people.

"I'm glad to see," said she, "that you sent away that mutton, for if more persons would object to things that are not properly cooked we'd all be better served. I suppose that in your country most people are so rich that they can afford to have the best of everything and have it always. I fancy the great wealth of American citizens must make their housekeeping very different from ours."

Now I must say I began to bristle at being spoken to like that. I'm as proud of being an American as anybody can be, but I don't like the home of the free thrown into my teeth every time I open my mouth. There's no knowing what money Jone and I have lost through giving orders to London cabmen in what is called our American accent. The minute we tell the driver of a hansom where we want to go, that place doubles its distance from the spot we start from. Now I think the great reason Jone's rumbling worked so well was that it had in it a sort of Great British chest-sound, as if his lungs was

rusty. The waiter had heard that before and knew what it meant. If he had spoken out in the clear American fashion I expect his voice would have gone clear through the waiter without his knowing it, like the person in the story, whose neck was sliced through and who didn't know it until he sneezed and his head fell off.

"Yes, ma'am," said I, answering her with as much of a wearied feeling as I could put on, "our wealth is all very well in some ways, but it is dreadful wearing on us. However, we try to bear up under it and be content."

"Well," said she, "contentment is a great blessing in every station, though I have never tried it in yours. Do you expect to make a long stay in London?"

As she seemed like a civil and well-meaning woman, and was the first person who had spoken to us in a social way, I didn't mind talking to her, and I told her we was only stopping in London until we could find the kind of country house we wanted, and when she asked what kind that was, I described what we wanted and how we was still answering advertisements and going to see agents, who was always recommending exactly the kind of house we did not care for.

"Vicarages are all very well," said she, "but it sometimes happens, and has happened to friends of mine, that when a vicar has let his house he makes

up his mind not to waste his money in travelling, and he takes lodgings near by and keeps an eternal eye upon his tenants. I don't believe any independent American would fancy that."

"No, indeed," said I; and then she went on to say that if we wanted a small country house for a month or two she knew of one which she believed would suit us, and it wasn't a vicarage either. When I asked her to tell me about it she brought her chair up to our table, together with her mug of beer, her bread and cheese, and she went into particulars about the house she knew of.

"It is situated," said she, "in the west of England, in the most beautiful part of our country. It is near one of the quaintest little villages that the past ages have left us, and not far away are the beautiful waters of the Bristol Channel, with the mountains of Wales rising against the sky on the horizon, and all about are hills and valleys, and woods and beautiful moors and babbling streams, with all the loveliness of cultivated rurality merging into the wild beauties of unadorned nature." If these was not exactly her words, they express the ideas she roused in my mind. She said the place was far enough away from railways and the stream of travel, and among the simple peasantry, and that in the society of the resident gentry we would see English country life as it is, uncontaminated by the tourist or the commercial traveller.

I can't remember all the things she said about this charming cottage in this most supremely beautiful spot, but I sat and listened, and the description held me spell-bound, as a snake fascinates a frog; with this difference, instead of being swallowed by the description, I swallowed it.

When the old woman had given us the address of the person who had the letting of the cottage, and Jone and me had gone to our room, I said to him, before we had time to sit down:

"What do you think?"

"I think," said he, "that we ought to follow that old woman's advice and go and look at this house."

"Go and look at it?" I exclaimed. "Not a bit of it. If we do that, we are bound to see something or hear something that will make us hesitate and consider, and if we do that, away goes our enthusiasm and our rapture. I say, telegraph this minute and say we'll take the house, and send a letter by the next mail with a postal order in it, to secure the place."

Jone looked at me hard, and said he'd feel easier in his mind if he understood what I was talking about.

"Never mind understanding," I said. "Go down and telegraph we'll take the house. There isn't a minute to lose!"

"But," said Jone, "if we find out when we get there——"

"Never mind that," said I. "If we find out when we get there it isn't all we thought it was, and we're bound to do that, we'll make the best of what doesn't suit us because it can't be helped; but if we go and look at it it's ten to one we won't take it."

"How long are we to take it for?" said Jone.

"A month anyway, and perhaps longer," I told him, giving him a push toward the door.

"All right," said he, and he went and telegraphed. I believe if Jone was told he could go anywhere and stay for a month he'd choose that place from among all the most enchanting spots on the earth where he couldn't stay so long. As for me, the one thing that held me was the romanticness of the place. From what the old woman said I knew there couldn't be any mistake about that, and if I could find myself the mistress of a romantic cottage near an ancient village of the olden time I would put up with most everything except dirt, and as dirt and me seldom keeps company very long, even that can't frighten me.

When I saw the old woman at luncheon the next day and told her what we had done she was fairly dumfounded.

"Really! really!" she said, "you Americans are the speediest people I ever did see. Why, an English person would have taken a week to consider that place before taking it."

"And lost it, ten to one," said I.

She shook her head.

"Well," said she, "I suppose it's on account of your habits, and you can't help it, but it's a poor way of doing business."

Now I began to think from this that her conscience was beginning to trouble her for having given so fairy-like a picture of the house, and as I was afraid that

"You Americans are the speediest people"

she might think it her duty to bring up some disadvantages, I changed the conversation and got away as soon as I could. When we once get seated at our humble board in our rural cot I won't be afraid of any bugaboos, but I didn't want them brought up then. I can generally depend upon Jone, but sometimes he gets a little stubborn.

We didn't see this old person any more, and when I asked the waiter about her the next day he said he was sure she had left the hotel, by which I sup-

pose he must have meant he'd got his half-crown. Her fading away in this fashion made it all seem like a myth or a phantasm, but when, the next morning, we got a receipt for the money Jone sent, and a note saying the house was ready for our reception, I felt myself on solid ground again, and to-morrow we start, bag and baggage, for Chedcombe, which is the name of the village where the house is that we have taken. I'll write to you, madam, as soon as we get there, and I hope with all my heart and soul that when we see what's wrong with it—and there's bound to be something—that it may not be anything bad enough to make us give it up and go floating off in voidness, like a spider-web blown before a summer breeze, without knowing what it's going to run against and stick to, and, what is more, probably lose the money we paid in advance.

Letter Number Four

CHEDCOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE

LAST winter Jone and I read all the books we could get about the rural parts of England, and we knew that the country must be very beautiful, but we had no proper idea of it until we came to Chedcombe. I am not going to write much about the scenery in this part of the country, because, perhaps, you have been here and seen it, and anyway my writing would not be half so good as what you could read in books, which don't amount to anything.

All I'll say is that if you was to go over the whole of England, and collect a lot of smooth green hills, with sheep and deer wandering about on them; brooks, with great trees hanging over them, and vines and flowers fairly crowding themselves into the water; lanes and roads hedged in with hawthorn, wild roses, and tall purple foxgloves; little woods and copses; hills covered with heather; thatched cottages like the pictures in drawing-books, with roses against their walls, and thin blue smoke curling up from the chimneys; distant views of the sparkling sea; villages which are nearly covered up by greenness, except their steeples; rocky cliffs all green with vines, and flowers spreading and thriv-

ing with the fervor and earnestness you might expect to find in the tropics, but not here—and then, if you was to put all these points of scenery into one place not too big for your eye to sweep over and take it all in, you would have a country like that around Chedcombe.

I am sure the old lady was right when she said it was the most beautiful part of England. The first day we was here we carried an umbrella as we walked through all this verdant loveliness, but yesterday morning we went to the village and bought a couple of thin mackintoshes, which will save us a lot of trouble opening and shutting umbrellas.

When we got out at the Chedcombe station we found a man there with a little carriage he called a fly, who said he had been sent to take us to our house. There was also a van to carry our baggage. We drove entirely through the village, which looked to me as if a bit of the Middle Ages had been turned up by the plough, and on the other edge of it there was our house, and on the doorstep stood a lady, with a smiling eye and an umbrella, and who turned out to be our landlady. Back of her was two other females, one of them looking like a minister's wife, while the other one I knew to be a servant-maid, by her cap.

The lady, whose name was Mrs. Shutterfield, shook hands with us and seemed very glad to see

"THAT WAS OUR HOUSE"

us, and the minister's wife took our hand-bags from us and told the men where to carry our trunks. Mrs. Shutterfield took us into a little parlor on one side of the hall, and then we three sat down, and I must say I was so busy looking at the queer, delightful room, with everything in it—chairs, tables, carpets, walls, pictures, and flower-vases—all belonging to a bygone epoch, though perfectly fresh, as if just made, that I could scarcely pay attention to what the lady said. But I listened enough to know that Mrs. Shutterfield told us that she had taken the liberty of engaging for us two most excellent servants, who had lived in the house before it had been let to lodgers, and who, she was quite sure, would suit us very well, though, of course, we were at liberty to do what we pleased about engaging them. The one that I took for the minister's wife was a combination of cook and housekeeper, by the name of Miss Pondar, and the other was a maid in general, named Hannah. When the lady mentioned two servants it took me a little aback, for we had not expected to have more than one, but when she mentioned the wages, and I found that both put together did not cost as much as a very poor cook would expect in America, and when I remembered we as now at work socially booming ourselves, and that it wouldn't do to let this lady think that we had not been accustomed to varieties of servants, I spoke up and said we would engage the

two estimable women she recommended, and was much obliged to her for getting them.

Then we went over that house, down stairs and up, and of all the lavender-smelling old-fashionedness anybody ever dreamed of, this little house has as much as it can hold. It is fitted up all through like one of your mother's bonnets, which she bought before she was married and never wore on account of a funeral in the family, but kept shut up in a box, which she only opens now and then to show to her descendants. In every room and on the stairs there was a general air of antiquated freshness, mingled with the odors of English breakfast tea and recollections of the story of Cranford, which, if Jone and me had been alone, would have made me dance from the garret of that house to the cellar. Every sentiment of romance that I had in my soul bubbled to the surface, and I felt as if I was one of my ancestors before she emigrated to the colonies. I could not say what I thought, but I pinched Jone's arm whenever I could get a chance, which relieved me a little; and when Miss Pondar had come to me with a little courtesy, and asked me what time I would like to have dinner, and told me what she had taken the liberty of ordering, so as to have everything ready by the time I came, and Mrs. Shutterfield had gone, after begging to know what more she could do for us, and we had gone to our own room, I let out my feelings in one wild scream of delirious gladness

that would have been heard all the way to the railroad station if I had not covered my head with two pillows and the corner of a blanket.

After we had dinner, which was as English as the British lion, and much more to our taste than anything we had had in London, Jone went out to smoke a pipe, and I had a talk with Miss Pondar about fish, meat, and groceries, and about housekeeping matters in general. Miss Pondar, whose general aspect of minister's wife began to wear off when I talked to her, mingles respectfulness and respectability in a manner I haven't been in the habit of seeing. Generally those two things run against each other, but they don't in her.

When she asked what kind of wine we preferred I must say I was struck all in a heap, for wines to Jone and me is like a trackless wilderness without compass or binnacle light, and we seldom drink them except made hot, with nutmeg grated in, for colic; but as I wanted her to understand that if there was any luxuries we didn't order it was because we didn't approve of them, I told her that we was total abstainers, and at that she smiled very pleasant and said that was her persuasion also, and that she was glad not to be obliged to handle intoxicating drinks, though, of course, she always did it without objection when the family used them. When I told Jone this he looked a little blank, for foreign water generally doesn't agree with him. I mentioned this afterwards

to Miss Pondar, and she said it was very common in total abstaining families, when water didn't agree with any one of them, especially if it happened to be the gentleman, to take a little good Scotch whiskey with it; but when I told this to Jone he said he would try to bear up under the shackles of abstinence.

This morning, when I was talking with Miss Pondar about fish, and trying to show her that I knew something about the names of English fishes, I said that we was very fond of whitebait. At this she looked astonished for the first time.

"Whitebait?" said she. "We always looked upon that as belonging entirely to the nobility and gentry." At this my back began to bristle, but I didn't let her know it, and I said, in a tone of emphatic mildness, that we would have whitebait twice a week, on Tuesday and Friday. At this Miss Pondar gave a little courtesy and thanked me very much, and said she would attend to it.

When Jone and me came back after taking a long walk that morning I saw a pair of Church of England prayer-books, looking as if they had just been neatly dusted, lying on the parlor table, where they hadn't been before, for I had carefully looked over every book. I think that when it was borne in upon Miss Pondar's soul that we was accustomed to having whitebait as a regular thing she made up her mind we was all right, and that nothing but the Estab-

lished Church would do for us. Before, she might have thought we was Wesleyans.

Our maid Hannah is very nice to look at, and does her work as well as anybody could do it, and, like most other English servants, she's in a state of never-ending thankfulness, but as I can never understand a word she says except "Thank you very much," I asked Jone if he didn't think it would be a good thing for me to try to teach her a little English.

"Now then," said he, "that's the opening of a big subject. Wait until I fill my pipe and we'll discourse upon it." It was just after luncheon, and we was sitting in the summer-house at the end of the garden, looking out over the roses and pinks and all sorts of old-timey flowers growing as thick as clover heads, with an air as if it wasn't the least trouble in the world to them to flourish and blossom. Beyond the flowers was a little brook with the ducks swimming in it, and beyond that was a field, and on the other side of that field was a park belonging to the lord of the manor, and scattered about the side of a green hill in the park was a herd of his lordship's deer. Most of them was so light-colored that I fancied I could almost see through them, as if they was the little transparent bugs that crawl about on leaves. That isn't a romantic idea to have about deers, but I can't get rid of the notion whenever I see those little creatures walking about on the hills.

At that time it was hardly raining at all, just a little mist, with the sun coming into the summer-house every now and then, making us feel very comfortable and contented.

"Now," said Jone, when he had got his pipe well started, "what I want to talk about is the amount of reformation we expect to do while we're sojourning in the kingdom of Great Britain."

"Reformation!" said I; "we didn't come here to reform anything."

"Well," said Jone, "if we're going to busy our minds with these people's shortcomings and long-goings, and don't try to reform them, we're just worrying ourselves and doing them no good, and I don't think it will pay. Now, for instance, there's that rosy-cheeked Hannah. She's satisfied with her way of speaking English, and Miss Pondar understands it and is satisfied with it, and all the people around here are satisfied with it. As for us, we know, when she comes and stands in the doorway and dimples up her cheeks, and then makes those sounds that are more like drops of molasses falling on a gong than anything else I know of, we know that she is telling us in her own way that the next meal, whatever it is, is ready, and we go to it."

"Yes," said I, "and as I do most of my talking with Miss Pondar, and as we shall be here for such a short time anyway, it may be as well——"

"What I say about Hannah," said Jone, inter-

rupting me as soon as I began to speak about a short stay, "I have to say about everything else in England that doesn't suit us. As long as Hannah doesn't try to make us speak in her fashion I say let her alone. Of course, we shall find a lot of things over here that we shall not approve of—we knew that before we came—and when we find we can't stand their ways and manners any longer we can pack up and go home, but so far as I'm concerned I'm getting along very comfortable so far."

"Oh, so am I," I said to him, "and as to interfering with other people's fashions, I don't want to do it. If I was to meet the most paganish of heathens entering his temple with suitable humbleness I wouldn't hurt his feelings on the subject of his religion, unless I was a missionary and went about it systematic; but if that heathen turned on me and jeered at me for attending our church at home, and told me I ought to go down on my marrow-bones before his brazen idols, I'd whang him over the head with a frying-pan or anything else that came handy. That's the sort of thing I can't stand. As long as the people here don't snort and sniff at my ways I won't snort and sniff at theirs."

"Well," said Jone, "that is a good rule, but I don't know that it's going to work altogether. You see, there are a good many people in this country and only two of us, and it will be a lot harder for them to keep from sniffing and snorting than

for us to do it. So it's my opinion that if we expect to get along in a good-humored and friendly way, which is the only decent way of living, we've got to hold up our end of the business a little higher than we expect other people to hold up theirs."

I couldn't agree altogether with Jone about our trying to do better than other people, but I said that as the British had been kind enough to make their country free to us, we wouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth unless it kicked. To which Jone said I sometimes got my figures of speech hind part foremost, but he knew what I meant.

We've lived in our cottage two weeks, and every morning when I get up and open our windows, which has little panes set in strips of lead, and hinges on one side so that it works like a door, and look out over the brook and the meadows and the thatched roofs, and see the peasant men with their short jackets and woollen caps, and the lower part of their trousers tied round with twine, if they don't happen to have leather leggings, trudging to their work, my soul is filled with welling emotions as I think that if Queen Elizabeth ever travelled along this way she must have seen these great old trees and, perhaps, some of these very houses; and as to the people, they must have been pretty much the same, though differing a little in clothes, I dare say; but, judging from Hannah, perhaps not very much in the kind of English they spoke.

I declare that when Jone and me walk about through the village, and over the fields, for there is a right of way—meaning a little path—through most all of them, and when we go into the old church, with its yew-trees, and its gravestones, and its marble effigies of two of the old manor lords, both stretched flat on their backs, as large as life, the gentleman with the end of his nose knocked off and with his feet crossed to show he was a crusader, and the lady with her hands clasped in front of her, as if she expected the generations who came to gaze on her tomb to guess what she had inside of them, I feel like a character in a novel.

I have kept a great many of my joyful sentiments to myself, because Jone is too well contented as it is, and there is a great deal yet to be seen in England. Sometimes we hire a dogcart and a black horse named Punch, from the inn in the village, and we take long drives over roads that are almost as smooth as bowling alleys. The country is very hilly, and every time we get to the top of a hill we can see, spread about us for miles and miles, the beautiful hills and vales, and lordly residences and cottages, and steeple tops, looking as though they had been stuck down here and there, to show where villages had been planted.

Letter Number Five

CHEDCOMBE

THIS morning, when Jone was out taking a walk and I was talking to Miss Pondar, and getting her to teach me how to make Devonshire clotted cream, which we have for every meal, putting it on everything it will go on, into everything it will go into, and eating it by itself when there is nothing it will go on or into; and trying to find out why it is that whitings are always brought on the table with their tails stuck through their throats, as if they had committed suicide by cutting their jugular veins in this fashion, I saw, coming along the road to our cottage, a pretty little dogcart with two ladies in it. The horse they drove was a pony, and the prettiest creature I ever saw, being formed like a full-sized horse, only very small, and with as much fire and

spirit and gracefulness as could be got into an animal sixteen hands high. I heard afterward that he came from Exmoor, which is about twelve miles from here, and produces ponies and deers of similar size and swiftness. They stopped at the door, and one of them got out and came in. Miss Pondar told me she wished to see me, and that she was Mrs. Locky, of the "Bordley Arms" in the village.

"The innkeeper's wife?" said I; to which Miss Pondar said it was, and I went into the parlor. Mrs. Locky was a handsome-looking lady, and wearing as stylish clothes as if she was a duchess, and extremely polite and respectful.

She said she would have asked Mrs. Shutterfield to come with her and introduce her, but that lady was away from home, and so she had come by herself to ask me a very great favor.

When I begged her to sit down and name it she went on to say there had come that morning to the inn a very large party in a coach-and-four, that was making a trip through the country, and as they didn't travel on Sunday they wanted to stay at the "Bordley Arms" until Monday morning.

"Now," said she, "that puts me to a dreadful lot of trouble, because I haven't room to accommodate them all, and even if I could get rooms for them somewhere else they don't want to be separated. But there is one of the best rooms at the inn which is occupied by an elderly gentleman, and if I could

get that room I could put two double beds in it and so accommodate the whole party. Now, knowing that you had a pleasant chamber here that you don't use, I thought I would make bold to come and ask you if you would lodge Mr. Poplington until Monday?"

"What sort of a person is this Mr. Poplington, and is he willing to come here?"

"Oh, I haven't asked him yet," said she, "but he is so extremely good-natured that I know he will be glad to come here. He has often asked me who lived in this extremely picturesque cottage."

"You must have an answer now?" said I.

"Oh, yes," said she, "for if you cannot do me this favor I must go somewhere else, and where to go I don't know."

Now I had begun to think that the one thing we wanted in this little home of ours was company, and that it was a great pity to have that nice bedroom on the second floor entirely wasted, with nobody ever in it. So, as far as I was concerned, I would be very glad to have some pleasant person in the house, at least for a day or two, and I didn't believe Jone would object. At any rate it would put a stop, at least for a little while, to his eternally saying how Corinne, our daughter, would enjoy that room, and how nice it would be if we was to take this house for the rest of the season and send for her. Now, Corinne's as happy as she can be at her grand-

mother's farm, and her school will begin before we're ready to come home, and, what is more, we didn't come here to spend all our time in one place.

While I was thinking of these things I was looking out of the window at the lady in the dogcart

"The young lady who keeps the bar"

who was holding the reins. She was as pretty as a picture, and wore a great straw hat with lovely flowers in it. As I had to give an answer without waiting for Jone to come home, and I didn't expect him until luncheon time, I concluded to be neigh-

borly, and said we would take the gentleman to oblige her. Even if the arrangement didn't suit him or us, it wouldn't matter much for that little time. At which Mrs. Locky was very grateful indeed, and said she would have Mr. Poplington's luggage sent around that afternoon, and that he would come later.

As she got up to go I said to her, "Is that young lady out there one of the party who came with the coach and four?"

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Locky, "she lives with me. She is the young lady who keeps the bar."

I expect I opened my mouth and eyes pretty wide, for I was never so astonished. A young lady like that keeping the bar! But I didn't want Mrs. Locky to know how much I was surprised, and so I said nothing about it.

When they had gone and I had stood looking after them for about a minute, I remembered I hadn't asked whether Mr. Poplington would want to take his meals here, or whether he would go to the inn for them. To be sure, she only asked me to lodge him, but as the inn is more than half a mile from here, he may want to be boarded. But this will have to be found out when he comes, and when Jone comes home it will have to be found out what he thinks about my taking a lodger while he's out taking a walk.

Letter Number Six

CHEDCOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE

WHEN Jone came home and I told him a gentleman was coming to live with us, he thought at first I was joking; and when he found out that I meant what I said he looked very blue, and stood with his hands in his pockets and his eyes on the ground, considering.

"He's not going to take his meals here, is he?"

"I don't think he expects that," I said, "for Mrs. Locky only spoke of lodging."

"Oh, well," said Jone, looking as if his clouds was clearing off a little, "I don't suppose it will matter to us if that room is occupied over Sunday, but I think the next time I go out for a stroll I'll take you with me."

I didn't go out that afternoon, and sat on pins and needles until half-past five o'clock. Jone wanted me to walk with him, but I wouldn't do it, because I didn't want our lodger to come here and be received by Miss Pondar. At half-past five there came a cart with the gentleman's luggage, as they call it here, and I was glad Jone wasn't at home. There was an enormous leather portman-

teau, which looked as if it had been dragged by a boy too short to lift it from the ground, half over the world; a hat-box, also of leather, but not so draggy looking; a bundle of canes and umbrellas, a leather dressing-case, and a flat, round bathing-tub. I had the things taken up to the room as quickly as I could, for if Jone had seen them he'd think the gentleman was going to bring his family with him.

It was nine o'clock and still broad daylight when Mr. Poplington himself came, carrying a fishing-rod put up in parts in a canvas bag, a fish-basket, and a small valise. He wore leather leggings and was about sixty years old, but a wonderful good walker. I thought, when I saw him coming, that he had no rheumatism whatever, but I found out afterward that he had a little in one of his arms. He had white hair and white side-whiskers and a fine red face, which made me think of a strawberry partly covered with Devonshire clotted cream. Jone and I was sitting in the summer-house, he smoking his pipe, and we both went to meet the gentleman. He had a bluff way of speaking, and said he was much obliged to us for taking him in; and after saying that it was a warm evening, a thing which I hadn't noticed, he asked to be shown to his room. I sent Hannah with him, and then Jone and I went back to the summer-house.

I didn't know exactly why, but I wasn't in as

good spirits as I had been, and when Jone spoke he didn't make me feel any better.

"It seems to me," said he, "that I see signs of

"I see signs of weakening in the social boom"

weakening in the social boom. That man considers us exactly as we considered our lodging-house keeper in London. Now, it doesn't strike me that that sample person you was talking about, who is a

cross between a rich farmer and a poor gentleman, would go into the lodging-house business." I couldn't help agreeing with Jone, and I didn't like it a bit. The gentleman hadn't said anything or done anything that was out of the way, but there was a benignant loftiness about him which grated on the inmost fibres of my soul.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said I, turning sharp on Jone, "we won't charge him a cent. That'll take him down, and show him what we are. We'll give him the room as a favor to Mrs. Locky, considering her in the light of a neighbor and one who sent us a cucumber."

"All right," said Jone, "I like that way of arranging the business. Up goes the social boom again!"

Just as we was going up to bed Miss Pondar came to me and said that the gentleman had called down to her and asked if he could have a new-laid egg for his breakfast, and she asked if she should send Hannah early in the morning to see if she could get a perfectly fresh egg from one of the cottages. "I thought, ma'am, that perhaps you might object to buying things on Sunday."

"I do," I said. "Does that Mr. Poplington expect to have his breakfast here? I only took him to lodge."

"Oh, ma'am," said Miss Pondar, "they always takes their breakfasts where they has their rooms.

Dinner and luncheon is different, and he may expect to go to the inn for them."

"Indeed!" said I. "I think he may, and if he breakfasts here he can take what we've got. If the eggs are not fresh enough for him he can try to get along with some bacon. He can't expect that to be fresh."

Knowing that English people take their breakfast late, Jone and I got up early, so as to get through before our lodger came down. But, bless me, when we went to the front door to see what sort of a day it was we saw him coming in from a walk. "Fine morning," said he, and in fact there was only a little drizzle of rain, which might stop when the sun got higher; and he stood near us and began to talk about the trout in the stream, which, to my utter amazement, he called a river.

"Do you take your license by the day or week?" he said to Jone.

"License!" said Jone, "I don't fish."

"Really!" exclaimed Mr. Poplington. "Oh, I see, you are a cycler."

"No," said Jone, "I'm not that, either, I'm a pervader."

"Really!" said the old gentleman: "what do you mean by that?"

"I mean that I pervade the scenery, sometimes on foot and sometimes in a trap. That's my style of rural pleasuring."

"But you do fish at home," I said to Jone, not wishing the English gentleman to think my husband was a city man, who didn't know anything about sport.

"Oh, yes," said Jone, "I used to fish for perch and sunfish."

"Sunfish?" said Mr. Poplington. "I don't know that fish at all. What sort of a fly do you use?"

"I don't fish with any flies at all," said Jone; "I bait my hook with worms."

Mr. Poplington's face looked as if he had poured liquid shoe-blacking on his meat, thinking it was Worcestershire sauce. "Fancy! Worms! I'd never take a rod in my hands if I had to use worms. Never used a worm in my life. There's no sort of science in worm fishing."

"There's double sport," said Jone, "for first you've got to catch your worm. Then again, I hate shams; if you have to catch fish there's no use cheating them into the bargain."

"Cheat!" cried Mr. Poplington. "If I had to catch a whale I'd fish for him with a fly. But you Americans are strange people. Worms, indeed!"

"We don't all use worms," said Jone; "there's lots of fly fishers in America, and they use all sorts of flies. If we are to believe all the Californians tell us some of the artificial flies out there must be as big as crows."

"Really?" said Mr. Poplington, looking hard at Jone, with a little twinkling in his eyes. "And when gentlemen fish who don't like to cheat the fishes, what size of worms do they use?"

"Well," said Jone, "in the far West I've heard that the common black snake is the favorite bait. He's six or seven feet long, and fishermen that use him don't have to have any line. He's bait and line all in one."

Mr. Poplington laughed. "I see you are fond of a joke," said he, "and so am I, but I'm also fond of my breakfast."

"I'm with you there," said Jone, and we all went in.

Mr. Poplington was very pleasant and chatty, and of course asked a great many questions about America. Nearly all English people I've met want to talk about our country, and it seems to me that what they do know about it isn't any better, considered as useful information, than what they don't know. But Mr. Poplington has never been to America, and so he knows more about us than those Englishmen who come over to write books, and only have time to run around the outside of things, and get themselves tripped up on our ragged edges.

He said he had met a good many Americans, and liked them, but he couldn't see for the life of him why they do some things English people don't do,

and don't do things English people do do. For instance, he wondered why we don't drink tea for breakfast. Miss Pondar had made it for him, knowing he'd want it, and he wonders why Americans drink coffee when such good tea as that was comes in their reach.

Now, if I had considered Mr. Poplington as a lodger it might have nettled me to have him tell me I didn't know what was good, but remembering that we was giving him hospitality, and not board, and didn't intend to charge him a cent, but was just taking care of him out of neighborly kindness, I was rather glad to have him find a little fault, because that would make me feel as if I was soaring still higher above him the next morning, when I should tell him there was nothing to pay.

So I took it all good-natured, and said to him, "Well, Americans like to have the very best things that can be got out of every country. We're like bees flying over the whole world, looking into every blossom to see what sweetness there is to be got out of it. From the lily of France we sip their coffee, from the national flower of India, whatever it is, we take their chutney sauce, and as to those big apple tarts, baked in a deep dish, with a cup in the middle to hold up the upper crust, and so full of apples, and so delicious with Devonshire clotted cream on them that if there was any one place in the world they could be had I believe my husband

would want to go and live there forever, *they* are what we extract from the rose of England."

Mr. Poplington laughed like anything at this, but said there was a great many other things that he could show us and tell us about which would be very well worth while sipping from the rose of England.

After breakfast he went to church with us, and as we was coming home—for he didn't seem to have the least idea of going to the inn for his luncheon—he asked if we didn't find the services very different from those in America.

"Yes," said I, "they are about as different from Quaker services as a squirting fountain is from a corked bottle. The Methodists and Unitarians and Reformed Dutch and Campbellites and Hard-shell Baptists have different services too, but in the Episcopal churches things are all pretty much the same as they did this morning. You forget, sir, that in our country there are religions to suit all sizes of minds. We haven't any national religion any more than we have a national flower."

"But you ought to have," said he; "you ought to have an established church."

"You may be sure we'll have it," said Jone, "as soon as we agree as to which one it ought to be."

Letter Number Seven

CHEDCOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE

LAST Sunday afternoon Mr. Poplington asked us if we would not like to walk over to a ruined abbey about four miles away, which he said was very interesting. It seemed to me that four miles there and four miles back was a pretty long walk, but I wanted to see the abbey, and I wasn't going to let him think that a young American woman couldn't walk as far as an elderly English gentleman; so I agreed and so did Jone. The abbey is a wonderful place, and I never thought of being tired while wandering in the rooms and in the garden, where the old monks used to live and preach, and give food to the poor, and keep house without women—which was pious enough, but must have been untidy. But the thing that surprised me the most was what Mr. Poplington told us about the age of the place. It was not built all at once, and it's part ancient and part modern, and you needn't wonder, madam, that I was astonished when he said that the part called modern was finished just three years before America was discovered. When I heard that I seemed to shrivel up as if my country was a new-born babe alongside of a bearded patriarch; but I didn't stay shrivelled long,

AT THE ABBEY

for it can't be denied that a new-born babe has a good deal more to look forward to than a patriarch has.

It is amazing how many things in this part of the country we'd never have thought of if it hadn't been for Mr. Poplington. At dinner he told us about Exmoor and the Lorna Doone country, and the wild deer hunting that can be had nowhere else in England, and lots of other things that made me feel we must be up and doing if we wanted to see all we ought to see before we left Chedcombe. When I went upstairs I said to Jone that Mr. Poplington was a very different man from what I thought he was.

"He's just as nice as he can be, and I'm going to charge him for his room and his meals and for everything he's had."

Jone laughed, and asked me if that was the way I showed people I liked them.

"We intended to humble him by not charging him anything," I said, "and make him feel he had been depending on our bounty; but now I wouldn't hurt his feelings for the world, and I'll make out his bill in the morning myself. Women always do that sort of thing in England."

As you asked me, madam, to tell you everything that happened on our travels, I'll go on about Mr. Poplington. After breakfast on Monday morning he went over to the inn, and said he would come back and pack up his things; but when he did come

back he told us that those coach-and-four people had determined not to leave Chedcombe that day, but was going to stay and look at the sights in the neighborhood, and that they would want the room for that night. He said this had made him very angry, because they had no right to change their minds that way after having made definite arrangements in which other people besides themselves was concerned; and he had said so very plainly to the gentleman who seemed to be at the head of the party.

"I hope it will be no inconvenience to you, madam," he said, "to keep me another night."

"Oh, dear, no," said I; "and my husband was saying this morning that he wished you was going to stay with us the rest of our time here."

"Really!" exclaimed Mr. Poplington. "Then I'll do it. I'll go to the inn this minute and have the rest of my luggage brought over here. If this is any punishment to Mrs. Locky she deserves it, for she shouldn't have told those people they could stay longer without consulting me."

In less than an hour there came a van to our cottage with the rest of his luggage. There must have been over a dozen boxes and packages, besides things tied up and strapped; and as I saw them being carried up one at a time, I said to Miss Pondar that in our country we'd have two or three big trunks, which we could take about without any trouble.

"Yes, ma'am," said she; but I could see by her

face that she didn't believe luggage would be luggage unless you could lug it, but was too respectful to say so.

When Mr. Poplington got settled down in our spare room he blossomed out like a full-blown friend of the family, and accordingly began to give us advice. He said we should go as soon as we could and see Exmoor and all that region of country, and that if we didn't mind he'd like to go with us; to which we answered, of course, we should like that very much, and asked him what he thought would be the best way to go. So we had ever so much talk about that, and although we all agreed it would be nicer not to take a public coach, but travel private, we didn't find it easy to decide as to the manner of travel. We all agreed that a carriage and horses would be too expensive, and Jone was rather in favor of a dogcart for us if Mr. Poplington would like to go on horseback; but the old gentleman said it would be too much riding for him, and if we took a dogcart he'd have to take another one. But this wouldn't be a very sociable way of travelling, and none of us liked it.

"Now," exclaimed Mr. Poplington, striking his hand on the table, "I'll tell you exactly how we ought to go through that country—we ought to go on cycles."

"Bicycles?" said I.

"Tricycles, if you like," he answered, "but that's

the way to do it. It'll be cheap, and we can go as we like and stop when we like. We'll be as free and independent as the Stars and Stripes, and more so, for they can't always flap when they like and stop flapping when they choose. Have you ever tried it, madam?"

I replied that I had, a little, because my daughter had a tricycle, and I had ridden on it for a short distance and after sundown, but as for regular travel in the daytime I couldn't think of it.

At this Jone nearly took my breath away by saying that he thought that the bicycle idea was a capital one, and that for his part he'd like it better than any other way of travelling through a pretty country. He also said he believed I could work a tricycle just as well as not, and that if I got used to it I would think it fine.

I stood out against those two men for about a half an hour, and then I began to give in a little, and think that it might be nice to roll along on my own little wheels over their beautiful smooth roads, and stop and smell the hedges and pick flowers whenever I felt like it; and so it ended in my agreeing to do the Exmoor country on a tricycle while Mr. Poplington and Jone went on bicycles. As to getting the machines, Mr. Poplington said he would attend to that. There was people in London who hired them to excursionists, and all he had to do was to send an order and they would be on hand in a

day or two; and so that matter was settled and he wrote to London. I thought Mr. Poplington was a little old for that sort of exercise, but I found he had been used to doing a great deal of cycling in the part of the country where he lives; and besides, he isn't as old as I thought he was, being not much over fifty. The kind of air that keeps a country always green is wonderful in bringing out early red and white in a person.

"Everything happens wonderfully well, madam," said he, coming in after he had been to post his letter in a red iron box let into the side of the Wesleyan chapel, "doesn't it? Now here we're not able to start on our journey for two or three days, and I have just been told that the great hay-making in the big meadow to the south of the village is to begin to-morrow. They make the hay there only every other year, and they have a grand time of it. We must be there, and you shall see some of our English country customs."

We said we'd be sure to be in for that sort of thing.

I wish, madam, you could have seen that great hayfield. It belongs to the lord of the manor, and must have twenty or thirty acres in it. They've been three or four days cutting the grass on it with a machine, and now there's been nearly two days with hardly any rain, only now and then some drizzling, and a good, strong wind, which they think here is better for the hay-making than sunshine,

though they don't object to a little sun. All the people in the village who had legs good enough to carry them to that field went to help make hay. It was a regular holiday, and as hay is clean, nearly everybody was dressed in good clothes. Early in the morning some twenty regular farm laborers began raking the hay at one end of the field, stretching themselves nearly the whole way across it, and as the day went on more and more people came, men and women, high and low. All the young women and some of the older ones had rakes, and the way they worked them was amazing to see, but they turned over the hay enough to dry it. As to schoolgirls and boys, there was no end of them in the afternoon, for school let out early. Some of them worked, but most of them played and cut up monkey-shines on the hay. Even the little babies was brought on the field, and nice, soft beds made for them under the trees at one side.

When Jone saw the real farm-work going on, with a chance for everybody to turn in to help, his farmer blood boiled within him, as if he was a war-horse and sniffed the smoke of battle, and he got himself a rake and went to work like a good-fellow. I never saw so many men at work in a hayfield at home, but when I looked at Jone raking I could see why it was it didn't take so many men to get in our hay. As for me, I raked a little, but looked about a great deal more.

Near the middle of the field was two women working together, raking as steadily as if they had been brought up to it. One of these was young, and even handsomer than Miss Dick, which was the name of the bar lady. To look at her made me think of what I had read of Queen Marie Antoinette and her court ladies playing the part of milkmaids. Her straw hat was trimmed with delicate flowers, and her white muslin dress and pale blue ribbons made her the prettiest picture I ever saw out-of-doors. I could not help asking Mrs. Locky who she was, and she told me that she was the chambermaid at the inn, and the other was the cook. When I heard this I didn't make any answer, but just walked off a little way and began raking and thinking. I have often wondered why it is that English servants are so different from those we have, or, to put it in a strictly confidential way between you and me, madam, why the chambermaid at the "Bordley Arms," as she is, is so different from me, as I used to be when I first lived with you. Now that young chambermaid with the pretty hat is, as far as appearances go, as good a woman as I am, and if Jone was a bachelor and intended to marry her I would think it was as good a match as if he married me. But the difference between us two is that when I got to be the kind of woman I am I wasn't willing to be a servant, and if I had always been the kind of young woman

that chambermaid is I never would have been a servant.

I've kept a sharp eye on the young women in domestic service over here, having a fellow-feeling for them, as you can well understand, madam, and since I have been in the country I've watched the poor folks and seen how they live, and it's just as plain to me as can be that the young women who are maids and waitresses over here are the kind who would have tried to be shop-girls and dress-makers and even school-teachers in America, and many of the servants we have would be working in the fields if they lived over here. The fact is, the English people don't go to other countries to get their servants. Their way is like a factory consuming its own smoke. The surplus young women, and there must always be a lot of them, are used up in domestic service.

Now, if an American poor girl is good enough to be a first-class servant, she wants to be something else. Sooner than go out to service she will work twice as hard in a shop, or even go into a factory.

I have talked a good deal about this to Jone, and he says I'm getting to be a philosopher; but I don't think it takes much philosophizing to find out how this case stands. If house service could be looked upon in the proper way, it wouldn't take long for American girls who have to work for their living to find out that it's a lot better to live with nice

people, and cook and wait on the table, and do all those things which come natural to women the world over, than to stand all day behind a counter under the thumb of a floor-walker, or grind their lives out like slaves among a lot of steam-engines and machinery. The only reason the English have better house servants than we have is that here any girl who has to work is willing to be a house servant, and very good house servants they are, too.

Letter Number Eight

CHEDCOMBE

I WILL now finish telling you about the great hay-making day. Toward the end of the afternoon a lot of boys and girls began playing a game which seemed to belong to the hayfield. Each one of the bigger boys would twist up a rope of hay and run after a girl, and when he had thrown it over her neck he could kiss her. Girls are girls the whole world over, and it was funny to see how some of them would run like mad to get away from the boys, and how dreadfully troubled they would be when they was caught, and yet, after they had been kissed and the boys had left them, they would walk innocently back to the players as if they never

dreamed that anybody would think of disturbing them.

At five o'clock everybody—farm hands, ladies, gentlemen, school-children, and all—took tea together. Some were seated at long tables made of planks, with benches at the sides, and others scattered all over the grass. Miss Pondar and our maid Hannah helped to serve the tea and sandwiches, and I was glad to see that Hannah wore her pointed white cap and her black dress, for I had on my woollen travelling suit, and I didn't want too much cart-before-the-horseness in my domestic establishment.

After tea the work and the games began again, and as I think it is always better for people to do what they can do best, I turned in and helped clear away the tea-things, and after that I sat down by a female person in black silk—and I am sure I didn't know whether she was the lady of the manor or somebody else until I heard some h-words come out in her talk, and then I knew she was the latter—and she told me ever so much about the people in the village, and why the rector wasn't there, on account of a dispute about the altar-cloths, and she was just beginning to tell me about the doctor's wife sending her daughters to a school that was much too high-priced for his practice, when I happened to look across the field, and there, with the bar lady at the inn, with her hat trimmed with pink,

and the Marie Antoinette chambermaid, with her hat trimmed with blue, was Jone, and they was all three raking together, as comfortable and confiding as if they had been singing hymns out of the same book.

Now, I thought I had been sitting still long enough, and so I snipped off the rest of the doctor story and got myself across that field with pretty long steps. When I reached the happy three I didn't say anything, but went round in front of them and stood there, throwing a sarcastic and disdainful glance upon their farming. Jone stopped working, and wiped his face with his handkerchief, as if he was hot and tired, but hadn't thought of it until just then, and the two girls they stopped too.

"He's teaching us to rake, ma'am," said Miss Dick, revolving her green-gage eyes in my direction, "and really, ma'am, it's wonderful to see how good he does it. You Americans are so awful clever!"

As for the one with the blue trimmings, she said nothing, but stood with her hands folded on her rake, and her chiselled features steeped in a meek resignedness, though much too high colored, as though it had just been borne in upon her that this world is all a fleeting show, for man's illusion given, and such felicity as culling fragrant hay by the side of that manly form must e'en be foregone by her,

"THERE, WITH THE BAR LADY AND THE MARIE ANTOINETTE CHAMBERMAID, WAS JONE"

that I could have taken a handle of a rake and given her such a punch among her blue ribbons that her classic features would have frantically twined themselves around one resounding howl—but I didn't. I simply remarked to Jone, with a statuesque rigidity, that it was six o'clock and I was going home; to which he said he was going too, and we went.

"I thought," said I, as we proceeded with rapid steps across the field, "that you didn't come to England for the purpose of teaching the inhabitants."

Jone laughed a little. "That young lady put it rather strong," he said. "She and her friend was merely trying to rake as I did. I think they got on very well."

"Indeed!" said I—I expect with flashing eye—"but the next time you go into the disciple business I recommend that you take boys who really need to know something about farming, and not fine-as-fiddle young women that you might as well be ballet-dancing with as raking with, for all the hankering after knowledge they have."

"Oh!" said Jone, and that was all he did say, which was very wise in him, for, considering my state of feelings, his case was like a fish-hook in your finger—the more you pull and worry at it the harder it is to get out.

That evening, when I was quite cooled down, and

we was talking to Mr. Poplington about the haymaking and the free-and-easy way in which everybody came together, he was a good deal surprised that we should think that there was anything uncommon in that, coming from a country where everybody was free and equal. Jone was smoking his pipe, and when it draws well and he's had a good dinner and I haven't anything particular to say, he often likes to talk slow and preach little sermons.

"Yes, sir," said he, after considering the matter a little while, "according to the Constitution of the United States we are all free and equal, but there's a good many things the Constitution doesn't touch on, and one of them is the sorting out and sizing up of the population. Now, you people over here are like the metal types that the printers use. You've all got your letters on one end of you, and you know just where you belong, and if you happen to be knocked into 'pi' and mixed all up in a pile it is easy enough to pick you out and put you all in your proper cases; but it's different with us. According to the Constitution we're like a lot of carpet-tacks, one just the same as another, though in fact we're not alike, and it would not be easy if we got mixed up, say in a hayfield, to get ourselves all sorted out again according to the breadth of our heads and the sharpness of our points, so we don't like to do too much mixing, don't you see?" To which Mr.

Poplington said he didn't see, and then I explained to him that what Jone meant was that though in our country we was all equally free, it didn't do for us to be as freely equal as the people are sometimes over here, to which Mr. Poplington said, "Really!" but he didn't seem to be standing in the glaring sunlight of convincement. But the shade is often pleasant to be in, and he wound up by saying, as he bid us good-night, that he thought it would be a great deal better for us, if we had classes at all, to have them marked out plain, and stamped so that there could be no mistake; to which I said that if we did that the most of the mistakes would come in the sorting, which, according to my reading of books and newspapers, had happened to most countries that keep up aristocracies.

I don't know that he heard all that I said, for he was going up-stairs with his candle at the time, but when Jone and me got up-stairs in our own room I said to him, and he always hears everything I say, that in some ways the girls that we have for servants at home have some advantages over those we find here; to which Jone said, "Yes," and seemed to be sleepy.

Letter Number Nine

CHEDCOMBE

THERE was still another day of hay-making, but we couldn't wait for that, because our cycles had come from London and we was all anxious to be off, and you would have laughed, madam, if you could have seen us start. Mr. Poplington went off well enough, but Jone's bicycle seemed a little gay and hard to manage, and he frisked about a good deal at starting; but Jone had bought a bicycle long ago, when the things first came out, and on days when the roads was good he used to go to the post-office on it, and he said that if a man had ever ridden on top of a wheel about six feet high he ought to be able to balance himself on the pair of small wheels which they use nowadays. So, after getting his long legs into working order, he went very well, though with a snaky movement at first, and then I started.

Each one of us had a little hand-bag hung on our machine, and Mr. Poplington said we needn't take anything to eat, for there was inns to be found everywhere in England. Hannah started me off nicely by pushing my tricycle until I got it going, and Miss Pondar waved her handkerchief from the cottage door. When Hannah left me I went along

rather slow at first, but when I got used to the proper motion I began to do better, and was very sure it wouldn't take me long to catch up with Jone, who was still worm-fencing his way along the road. When I got entirely away from the houses, and began to smell the hedges and grassy banks so close to my nose, and feel myself gliding along over the smooth white road, my spirits began to soar like a bird, and I almost felt like singing.

The few people I met didn't seem to think it was anything wonderful for a woman to ride on a tricycle, and I soon began to feel as proper as if I was walking on a sidewalk. Once I came very near tangling myself up with the legs of a horse who was pulling a cart. I forgot that it was the proper thing in this country to turn to the left, and not to the right, but I gave a quick twist to my helm and just missed the cart-wheel, but it was a close scratch. This turning to the right, instead of to the left, was a mistake Jone made two or three times when he began to drive me in England, but he got over it, and since my grazing the cart it's not likely I shall forget it. As I breathed a sigh of relief after escaping this danger I took in a breath full of the scent of wild roses that nearly covered a bit of hedge, and my spirits rose again.

I had asked Jone and Mr. Poplington to go ahead, because I knew I could do a great deal better if I worked along by myself for a while, without being

told what I ought to do and what I oughtn't to do. There is nothing that bothers me so much as to have people try to teach me things when I am puzzling them out for myself. But now I found that although they could not be far ahead, I couldn't see them, on account of the twists in the road and the high hedges, and so I put on steam and went along at a fine rate, sniffing the breeze like a charger of the battlefield. Before very long I came to a place where the road forked, but the road to the left seemed like a lane leading to somebody's house, so I kept on in what was plainly the main road, which made a little turn where it forked. Looking out ahead of me, to see if I could catch sight of the two men, I could not see a sign of them, but I did see that I was on the top of a long hill that seemed to lead on and down and on and down, with no end to it.

I had hardly started down this hill when my tricycle became frisky and showed signs of wanting to run, and I got a little nervous, for I didn't fancy going fast down a slope like that. I put on the brake, but I don't believe I managed it right, for I seemed to go faster and faster; and then, as the machine didn't need any working, I took my feet off the pedals, with an idea, I think, though I can't now remember, that I would get off and walk down the hill. In an instant that thing took the bit in its teeth and away it went wildly tearing down hill. I

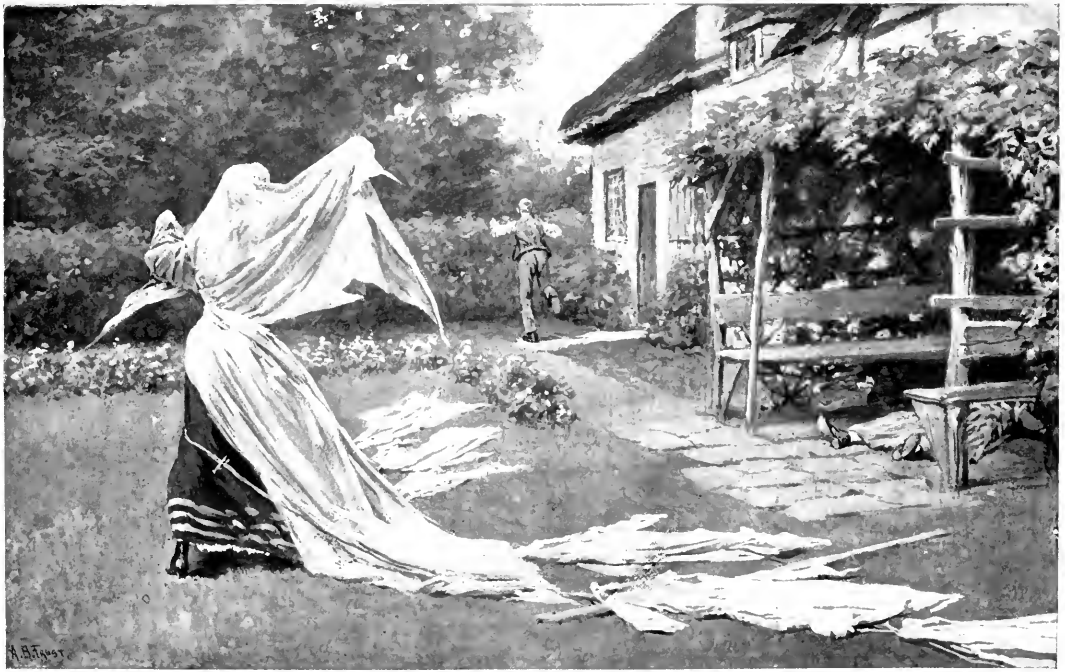
never was so much frightened in all my life. I tried to get my feet back on the pedals, but I couldn't do it, and all I could do was to keep that flying tricycle in the middle of the road. As far as I could see ahead there was not anything in the way of a wagon or a carriage that I could run into, but there was such a stretch of slope that it made me fairly dizzy. Just as I was having a little bit of comfort from thinking there was nothing in the way, a black woolly dog jumped out into the road some distance ahead of me and stood there barking. My heart fell, like a bucket into a well with the rope broken. If I steered the least bit to the right or the left I believe I would have bounded over the hedge like a glass bottle from a railroad train, and come down on the other side in shivers and splinters. If I didn't turn I was making a bee-line for the dog; but I had no time to think what to do, and in an instant that black woolly dog faded away like a reminiscence among the buzzing wheels of my tricycle. I felt a little bump, but was ignorant of further particulars.

I was now going at what seemed like a speed of ninety or a hundred miles an hour, with the wind rushing in between my teeth like water over a mill-dam, and I felt sure that if I kept on going down that hill I should soon be whirling through space like a comet. The only way I could think of to save myself was to turn into some level place where the thing would stop, but not a cross road did I pass;

but presently I saw a little house standing back from the road, which seemed to hump itself a little at that place so as to be nearly level, and over the edge of the hump it dipped so suddenly that I could not see the rest of the road at all.

"Now," thought I to myself, "if the gate of that house is open I'll turn into it, and no matter what I run into, it would be better than going over the edge of that rise beyond and down the awful hill that must be on the other side of it." As I swooped down to the little house and reached the level ground I felt I was going a little slower, but not much. However, I steered my tricycle round at just the right instant, and through the front gate I went like a flash.

I was going so fast, and my mind was so wound up on account of the necessity of steering straight, that I could not pay much attention to things I passed. But the scene that showed itself in front of me as I went through that little garden gate I could not help seeing and remembering. From the gate to the door of the house was a path paved with flagstones; the door was open, and there must have been a low step before it; back of the door was a hall which ran through the house, and this was paved with flagstones; the back door of the hall was open, and outside of it was a sort of arbor with vines, and on one side of this arbor was a bench, with a young man and a young woman sitting on it, holding each



"AT LAST I DID GET ON MY FEET"

other by the hand, and looking into each other's eyes; the arbor opened out on to a piece of green grass, with flowers of mixed colors on the edges of it, and at the back of this bit of lawn was a lot of clothes hung out on clothes-lines. Of course, I could not have seen all those things at once, but they came upon me like a single picture, for in one tick of a watch I went over that flagstone path and into that front door and through that house and out of that back door, and past that young man and that young woman, and head and heels both foremost at once, dashed slam-bang into the midst of all that linen hanging out on the lines.

I heard the minglement of a groan and a scream, and in an instant I was enveloped in a white, wet cloud of sheets, pillowcases, tablecloths, and underwear. Some of the things stuck so close to me, and others I grabbed with such a wild clutch, that nearly all the week's wash, lines and all, came down on me, wrapping me up like an apple in a dumpling—but I stopped. There was not anything in this world that would have been better for me to run into than those lines full of wet clothes.

Where the tricycle went to I didn't know, but I was lying on the grass kicking, and trying to get up and to get my head free, so that I could see and breathe. At last I did get on my feet, and throwing out my arms so as to shake off the sheets and pillowcases that was clinging all over me I shook some of

the things partly off my face, and with one eye I saw that couple on the bench, but only for a second. With a yell of horror, and with a face whiter than the linen I was wrapped in, that young man bounced from the bench, dashed past the house, made one clean jump over the hedge into the road, and disappeared. As for the young woman, she just flopped over and went down in a faint on the floor.

As soon as I could do it I got myself free from the clothes-line and staggered out on the grass. I was trembling so much I could scarcely walk, but when I saw that young woman looking as if she was dead on the ground I felt I must do something, and seeing a pail of water standing near by, I held it over her face and poured it down on her a little at a time, and it wasn't long before she began to squirm, and then she opened her eyes and her mouth just at the same time, so that she must have swallowed about as much water as she would have taken at a meal. This brought her to, and she began to cough and splutter and look around wildly, and then I took her by the arm and helped her up on the bench.

"Don't you want a little something to drink?" I said. "Tell me where I can get you something."

She didn't answer, but began looking from one side to the other. "Is he swallowed?" said she in a whisper, with her eyes starting out of her head.

"Swallowed?" said I. "Who?"

"Davy," said she.

"Oh, your young man," said I. "He is all right, unless he hurt himself jumping over the hedge. I saw him run away just as fast as he could."

"And the spirit?" said she. I looked hard at her.

"What has happened to you?" said I. "How did you come to faint?"

She was getting quieter, but she still looked wildly out of her eyes, and kept her back turned toward the bit of grass, as if she was afraid to look in that direction.

"What happened to you?" said I again, for I wanted to know what she thought about my sudden appearance. It took some little time for her to get ready to answer, and then she said:

"Was you frightened, lady? Did you have to come in here? I'm sorry you found me swooned. I don't know how long I was swooned. Davy and me was sitting here talking about having the banns called, and it was a sorry talk, lady, for the vicar, he's told me four times I should not marry Davy, because he says he is a Radical; but for all that Davy and me wants the banns called all the same, but not knowing how we was to have it done, for the vicar, he's so set against Davy, and Davy, he had just got done saying to me that he was going to marry me, vicar or no vicar, banns or no banns, come what might, when that very minute, with an

awful hiss, something flashed in front of us, dazzling my eyes so that I shut them and screamed, and then when I opened them again, there, in the yard back of us, was a great white spirit twice as high as the cow stable, with one eye in the middle of its forehead, turning around like a firework. I don't remember anything after that, and I don't know how long I was lying here when you came and found me, lady, but I know what it means. There is a curse on our marriage, and Davy and me will never be man and wife." And then she fell to groaning and moaning.

I felt like laughing when I thought how much like a church ghost I must have looked, standing there in solid white with my arms stretched out; but the poor girl was in such a dreadful state of mind that I sat down beside her and began to comfort her by telling her just what had happened, and that she ought to be very glad that I had found a place to turn into, and had not gone on down the hill and dashed myself into little pieces at the bottom. But it wasn't easy to cheer her up.

"Oh, Davy's gone," said she. "He'll never come back for fear of the curse. He'll be off with his uncle to sea. I'll never lay eyes on Davy again."

Just at that moment I heard somebody calling my name, and looking through the house I saw Jone at the front door and two men behind him. As I ran through the hall I saw that the two men with Jone

was Mr. Poplington and a young fellow with a pale face and trembling legs.

"Is this Davy?" said I.

"Yes," said he.

"Then go back to your young woman and comfort her," I said, which he did, and when he had gone, not madly rushing into his loved one's arms, but shuffling along in a timid way, as if he was afraid the ghost hadn't gone yet, I asked Jone how he happened to think I was here, and he told me that he and Mr. Poplington had taken the road to the left when they reached the fork, because that was the proper one, but they had not gone far before he thought I might not know which way to turn, so they came back to the fork to wait for me. But I had been closer behind them than they thought, and I must have come to the fork before they turned back, so, after waiting a while and going back along the road without seeing me, they thought that I must have taken the right-hand road, and they came that way, going down the hill very carefully. After a while Jone found my hat in the road, which up to that moment I had not missed, and then he began to be frightened and they went on faster.

They passed the little house, and as they was going down the hill they saw ahead of them a man running as if something had happened, so they let out their bicycles and soon caught up to him. This was Davy; and when they stopped him and asked

if anything was the matter he told them that a dreadful thing had come to pass. He had been working in the garden of a house about half a mile back when suddenly there came an awful crash, and a white animal sprang out of the house with a bit of a cotton mill fastened to its tail, and then, with a great peal of thunder, it vanished, and a white ghost rose up out of the ground with its arms stretching out longer and longer, reaching to clutch him by the hair. He was not afraid of anything living, but he couldn't abide spirits, so he laid down his spade and left the garden, thinking he would go and see the sexton and have him come and lay the ghost.

Then Jone went on to say that of course he could not make head or tail out of such a story as that, but when he heard that an awful row had been kicked up in a garden he immediately thought that as like as not I was in it, and so he and Mr. Poplington ran back, leaving their bicycles against the hedge, and bringing the young man with them.

Then I told my story, and Mr. Poplington said it was a mercy I was not killed, and Jone didn't say much, but I could see that his teeth was grinding.

We all went into the back yard, and there, on the other side of the clothes, which was scattered all over the ground, we found my tricycle, jammed into a lot of gooseberry bushes, and when it was dragged out we found it was not hurt a bit. Davy and his young woman was standing in the arbor looking

very sheepish, especially Davy, for she had told him what it was that had scared him. As we was going through the house, Jone taking my tricycle, I stopped to say good-by to the girl.

"Now that you see there has been no curse and no ghost," said I, "I hope that you will soon have your banns called, and that you and your young man will be married all right."

"Thank you very much, ma'am," said she, "but I'm awful fearful about it. Davy may say what he pleases, but my mother never will let me marry him if the vicar's agen it; and Davy wouldn't have been here to-day if she hadn't gone to town; and the vicar's a hard man and a strong Tory, and he'll always be agen it, I fear."

When I went out into the front yard I found Mr. Poplington and Jone sitting on a little stone bench, for they was tired, and I told them about that young woman and Davy.

"Humph," said Mr. Poplington, "I know the vicar of the parish. He is the Rev. Osmun Green. He's a good Conservative, and is perfectly right in trying to keep that poor girl from marrying a wretched Radical."

I looked straight at him and said:

"Do you mean, sir, to put politics before matrimonial happiness?"

"No, I don't," said he, "but a girl can't expect matrimonial happiness with a Radical."

I saw that Jone was about to say something here, but I got in ahead of him.

"I will tell you what it is, sir," said I, "if you think it is wrong to be a Radical the best thing you can do is to write to your friend, that vicar, and advise him to get those two young people married as soon as possible, for it is easy to see that she is going to rule the roost, and if anybody can get his Radicalistics out of him she will be the one to do it."

Mr. Poplington laughed, and said that as the man looked as if he was a fit subject to be henpecked it might be a good way of getting another Tory vote.

"But," said he, "I should think it would go against your conscience, being naturally opposed to the Conservatives, to help even by one vote."

"Oh, my conscience is all right," said I. "When politics runs against the matrimonial altar I stand up for the altar."

"Well," said he, "I'll think of it." And we started off, walking down the hill, Jone holding on to my tricycle.

When we got to level ground, with about two miles to go before we would stop for luncheon, Jone took a piece of thin rope out of his pocket—he always carries some sort of cord in case of accidents—and he tied it to the back part of my machine.

"Now," said he, "I'm going to keep hold of the

other end of this, and perhaps your tricycle won't run away with you."

I didn't much like going along this way, as if I was a cow being taken to market, but I could see that Jone had been so troubled and frightened about me that I didn't make any objection, and, in fact, after I got started it was a comfort to think there was a tie between Jone and me that was stronger, when hilly roads came into the question, than even the matrimonial tie.

Letter Number Ten

CHEDCOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE

THE place we stopped at on the first night of our cycle trip is named Porlock, and after the walking and the pushing, and the strain on my mind when going down even the smallest hill for fear Jone's rope would give way, I was glad to get there.

The road into Porlock goes down a hill, the steepest I have seen yet, and we all walked down, holding our machines as if they had been fiery coursers. This hill road twists and winds so you can only see part of it at a time, and when we was about half-way down we heard a horn blowing behind us, and looking around there came the mail-coach at full speed, with four horses, with a lot of people on top. As this raging coach passed by it nearly took my breath away, and as soon as I could speak I said to Jone: "Don't you ever say anything in America about having the roads made narrower so that it won't cost so much to keep them in order, for in my opinion it's often the narrow road that leadeth to destruction."

When we got into the town, and my mind really began to grapple with old Porlock, I felt as if I was sliding backward down the slope of the centuries,

and liked it. As we went along Mr. Poplington told us about everything, and said that this queer little town was a fishing village and seaport in the days of the Saxons, and that King Harold was once obliged to stop there for a while, and that he passed his time making war on the neighbors.

Mr. Poplington took us to a tavern called the Ship Inn, and I simply went wild over it. It is two hundred years old and two stories high, and everything I ever read about the hostelries of the past I saw there. The queer little door led into a queer little passage paved with stone. A pair of little stairs led out of this into another little room, higher up, and on the other side of the passage was a long, mysterious hallway. We had our dinner in a tiny parlor, which reminded me of a chapter in one of those old books where they use f instead of s, and where the first word of the next page is at the bottom of the one you are reading.

There was a fireplace in the room with a window one side of it, through which you could look into the street. It was not cold, but it had begun to rain hard, and so I made the dampness an excuse for a fire.

"This is antique, indeed," I said, when we were at the table.

"You are right there," said Mr. Poplington, who was doing his best to carve a duck, and was a little cross about it.

When I sat before the fire that evening, and Jone was asleep on a settee of the days of yore, and Mr. Poplington had gone to bed, being tired, my soul went back to the olden time, and, looking out through the little window in the fireplace, I fancied I could see William the Conqueror and the King of the Danes sneaking along the little street under the eaves of the thatched roofs, until I was so worked up that I was on the point of shouting, "Fly! oh, Saxon!" when the door opened and the maid who waited on us at the table put her head in. I took this for a sign that the curfew bell was going to ring, and so I woke up Jone and we went to bed.

But all night long the heroes of the past flocked about me. I had been reading a lot of history, and I knew them all the minute my eyes fell upon them. Charlemagne and Canute sat on the end of the bed, while Alfred the Great climbed up one of the posts until he was stopped by Hannibal's legs, who had them twisted about the post to keep himself steady. When I got up in the morning I went down-stairs into the little parlor, and there was the maid down on her knees cleaning the hearth.

"What is your name?" I said to her.

"Jane, please," said she.

"Jane what?" said I.

"Jane Puddle, please," said she.

I took a carving-knife from off the table, and standing over her I brought it down gently on top

of her head. "Rise, Sir Jane Puddle," said I, to which the maid gave a smothered gasp, and—would

"Rise, Sir Jane Puddle"

you believe it, madam?—she crept out of the room on her hands and knees. The cook waited on us

at breakfast, and I truly believe that the landlord and his wife breathed a sigh of relief when we left the Ship Inn, for their sordid souls had never heard of knighthood, but knew all about assassination.

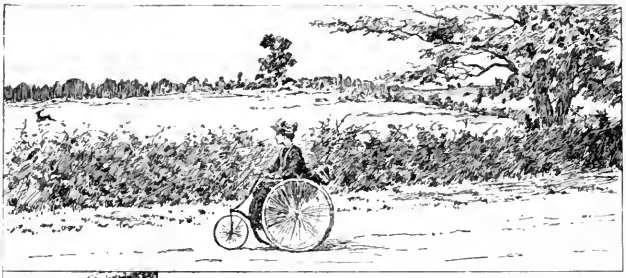
That morning we left Porlock by a hill which, compared with the one we came into it by, was like the biggest Pyramid of Egypt by the side of a haycock. I don't suppose in the whole civilized world there is a worse hill with a road on it than the one we went up by. I was glad we had to go up it instead of down it, though it was very hard to walk, pushing the tricycle, even when helped. I believe it would have taken away my breath and turned me dizzy even to take one step face forward down such a hill, and gaze into the dreadful depths below me; and yet they drive coaches and fours down that hill. At the top of the hill is this notice: "To cyclers—this hill is dangerous." If I had thought of it I should have looked for the cyclers' graves at the bottom of it.

The reason I thought about this was that I had been reading about one of the mountains in Switzerland, which is one of the highest and most dangerous, and with the poorest view, where so many Alpine climbers have been killed that there is a little graveyard nearly full of their graves at the foot of the mountain. How they could walk through that graveyard and read the inscriptions

on the tombstones and then go and climb that mountain is more than I can imagine.

In walking up this hill, and thinking that it might have been in front of me when my tricyle ran away, I could not keep my mind away from the little graveyard at the foot of the Swiss mountain.

Letter Number Eleven



CHEDCOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE

ON the third day of our cycle trip we journeyed along a lofty road, with the wild moor on one side and the tossing sea on the other, and at night reached Lynton. It is a little town on a jutting crag, and far down below it on the edge of the sea was another town named Lynmouth, and there is a car with a wire rope to it, like an elevator, which they call The Lift, which takes people up and down from one town to another.

Here we stopped at a house very different from the Ship Inn, for it looked as if it had been built the day before yesterday. Everything was new and shiny, and we had our supper at a long table with about twenty other people, just like a boarding-

house. Some of their ways reminded me of the backwoods, and I suppose there is nothing more modern than backwoodsism, which naturally hasn't the least alloy of the past. When the people got through with their cups of coffee or tea, mostly the last, two women went around the table, one with a big bowl for us to lean back and empty our slops into, and the other with the tea or coffee to fill up the cups. A gentleman with a baldish head, who was sitting opposite us, began to be sociable as soon as he heard us speak to the waiters, and asked questions about America. After he got through with about a dozen of them he said:

"Is it true, as I have heard, that what you call native-born Americans deteriorate in the third generation?"

I had been answering most of the questions, but now Jone spoke up quick. "That depends," says he, "on their original blood. When Americans are descended from Englishmen they steadily improve, generation after generation." The baldish man smiled at this, and said there was nothing like having good blood for a foundation. But Mr. Poplington laughed, and said to me that Jone had served him right.

The country about Lynton is wonderfully beautiful, with rocks and valleys, and velvet lawns running into the sea, and woods and ancestral mansions, and we spent the day seeing all this, and also going

down to Lynmouth, where the little ships lie high and dry on the sand when the tide goes out, and the carts drive up to them and put goods on board, and when the tide rises the ships sail away, which is very convenient.

I wanted to keep on along the coast, but the others didn't, and the next morning we started back to Chedcombe by a roundabout way, so that we might see Exmoor and the country where Lorna Doone and John Ridd cut up their didoes. I must say I liked the story a good deal better before I saw the country where the things happened. The mind of man is capable of soarings which Nature weakens at when she sees what she is called upon to do. If you want a real, first-class, tooth-on-edge Doone valley, the place to look for it is in the book. We went rolling along on the smooth, hard roads, which are just as good here as if they was in London, and all around us was stretched out the wild and desolate moors, with the wind screaming and whistling over the heather, nearly tearing the clothes off our backs, while the rain beat down on us with a steady pelting, and the ragged sheep stopped to look at us, as if we was three witches and they was Macbeths.

The very thought that I was out in a wild storm on a desolate moor filled my soul with a sort of triumph, and I worked my tricycle as if I was spurring my steed to battle. The only thing that

troubled me was the thought that if the water that poured off my mackintosh that day could have run into our cistern at home, it would have been a glorious good thing. Jone did not like the fierce blast and the inspiriting rain, but I knew he'd stand it as long as Mr. Poplington did, and so I was content, although, if we had been overtaken by a covered wagon, I should have trembled for the result.

That night we stopped in the little village of Simonsbath at Somebody's Arms. After dinner Mr. Poplington, who knew some people in the place, went out, but Jone and me went to bed as quick as we could, for we was tired. The next morning we was wakened by a tremendous pounding at the door. I didn't know what to make of it, for it was too early and too loud for hot water, but we heard Mr. Poplington calling to us, and Jone jumped up to see what he wanted.

"Get up," said he, "if you want to see a sight that you never saw before. We'll start off immediately and breakfast at Exford." The hope of seeing a sight was enough to make me bounce at any time, and I never dressed or packed a bag quicker than I did that morning, and Jone wasn't far behind me.

When we got down-stairs we found our cycles waiting ready at the door, together with the stable man and the stable boy and the boy's helper and

the cook and the chambermaid and the waiters and the other servants, waiting for their tips. Mr. Poplington seemed in a fine humor, and he told us he had heard the night before that there was to be a stag hunt that day, the first of the season. In fact, it was not one of the regular meets, but what they called a by-meet, and not known to everybody.

"We will go on to Exford," said he, straddling his bicycle, "for though the meet isn't to be there, there's where they keep the hounds and horses, and if we make good speed we shall get there before they start out."

The three of us travelled abreast, Mr. Poplington in the middle, and on the way he told us a good deal about stag hunts. What I remember best, having to go so fast and having to mind my steering, was that after the hunting season began they hunted stags until a certain day—I forget what it was—and then they let them alone and began to hunt the does; and that after that particular day of the month, when the stags heard the hounds coming they paid no attention to them, knowing very well it was the does' turn to be chased, and that they would not be bothered; and so they let the female members of their families take care of themselves; which shows that ungentlemanliness extends itself even into Nature.

When we got to Exford we left our cycles at the inn and followed Mr. Poplington to the hunting

stables, which are near by. I had not gone a dozen steps from the door before I heard a great barking, and the next minute there came around the corner a pack of hounds. They crossed the bridge over the little river, and then they stopped. We went up to them, and while Mr. Poplington talked to the men the whole of that pack of hounds gathered about us as gentle as lambs. They were good big dogs, white and brown. The head huntsman who had them in charge told me there was thirty couple of them, and I thought that sixty dogs was pretty heavy odds against one deer. Then they moved off as orderly as if they had been children in a kindergarten, and we went to the stables and saw the horses; and then the master of the hounds and a good many other gentlemen in red coats, in all sorts of traps, rode up, and their hunters were saddled, and the dogs barked and the men cracked their whips to keep them together, and there was a bustle and liveliness to a degree I can't write about, and Jone and I never thought about going in to breakfast until all those horses, some led and some ridden, and the men and the hounds, and even the dust from their feet, had disappeared.

I wanted to go see the hunt start off, but Mr. Poplington said it was two or three miles distant, and out of our way, and that we'd better move on as soon as possible so as to reach Chedcombe that

night; but he was glad, he said, that we had had a chance to see the hounds and the horses.

As for himself, I could see he was a little down in the mouth, for he said he was very fond of hunting, and that if he had known of this meet he would have been there with a horse and his hunting clothes. I think he hoped somebody would lend him a horse, but nobody did, and not being able to hunt himself he disliked seeing other people doing what he could not. Of course, Jone and me could not go to the hunt by ourselves, so after we'd had our tea and toast and bacon we started off. I will say here that when I was at the Ship Inn I had tea for my breakfast, for I couldn't bring my mind to order coffee—a drink the Saxons must never have heard of—in such a place; and since that we have been drinking it because Jone said there was no use fighting against established drinks, and that anyway he thought good tea was better than bad coffee.

Letter Number Twelve

CHEDCOMBE

As I said in my last letter, we started out for Chedcombe, not abreast, as we had been before, but strung along the road, and me and Mr. Poplington pretty doleful, being disappointed and not wanting to talk. But as for Jone, he seemed livelier than ever, and whistled a lot of tunes he didn't know. I think it always makes him lively to get rid of seeing sights. The sun was shining brightly, and there was no reason to expect rain for two or three hours anyway, and the country we passed through was so fine, with hardly any houses, and with great hills and woods, and sometimes valleys far below the road, with streams rushing and bubbling, that after a while I began to feel better, and I pricked up my tricycle, and, of course, being followed by Jone, we left Mr. Poplington, whose melancholy seemed to have gotten into his legs, a good way behind.

We must have travelled two or three hours when all of a sudden I heard a noise afar, and I drew up and listened. The noise was the barking of dogs, and it seemed to come from a piece of woods on the other side of the field which lay to the right of the road. The next instant something shot out

from under the trees and began going over the field in ten-foot hops. I sat staring without understanding, but when I saw a lot of brown and white spots bounce out of the wood, and saw, a long way back in the open field, two red-coated men on horseback, the truth flashed upon me that this was the hunt. The creature in front was the stag, who had chosen to come this way, and the dogs and the horses was after him, and I was here to see it all.

Almost before I got this all straight in my mind the deer was nearly opposite me on the other side of the field, going the same way that we were. In a second I clapped spurs into my tricycle and was off. In front of me was a long stretch of down grade, and over this I went as fast as I could work my pedals ; no brakes or holding back for me. My blood was up, for I was actually in a deer hunt, and to my amazement and wild delight I found I was keeping up with the deer. I was going faster than the men on horseback.

"Hi! Hi!" I shouted, and down I went with one eye on the deer and the other on the road, every atom of my body tingling with fiery excitement. When I began to go up the little slope ahead I heard Jone puffing behind me.

"You will break your neck," he shouted, "if you go down hill that way," and getting close up to me he fastened his cord to my tricycle. But I paid no attention to him or his advice.

"The stag! The stag!" I cried. "As long as he keeps near the road we can follow him! Hi!" And having got up to the top of the next hill I made ready to go down as fast as I had gone before, for we had fallen back a little, and the stag was now getting ahead of us; but it made me gnash my teeth to find that I could not go fast, for Jone held back with all his force (and both feet on the ground, I expect), and I could not get on at all.

"Let go of me," I cried, "we shall lose the stag. Stop holding back." But it wasn't any use; Jone's heels must have been nearly rubbed off, but he held back like a good fellow, and I seemed to be moving along no faster than a worm. I could not stand this; my blood boiled and bubbled; the deer was getting away from me; and if it had been Porlock Hill in front of me I would have dashed on, not caring whether the road was steep or level.

A thought flashed across my mind, and I clapped my hand into my pocket and jerked out a pair of scissors. In an instant I was free. The world and the stag was before me, and I was flying along with a tornado-like swiftness that soon brought me abreast of the deer. This perfectly splendid, bounding creature was not far away from me on the other side of the hedge, and as the field was higher than the road I could see him perfectly. His legs worked so regular and springy, except when he came to a cross hedge, which he went over with a

single clip, and came down like India rubber on the other side, that one might have thought he was measuring the grass, and keeping an account of his jumps in his head.

For one instant I looked around for the hounds, and I saw there was not more than half a dozen fol-

"In an instant I was free"

lowing him, and I could only see the two hunters I had seen before, and these was still a good way back. As for Jone, I couldn't hear him at all, and he must have been left far behind. There was still the woods on the other side, and the deer seemed to run to keep away from that and to cross the

road, and he came nearer and nearer until I fancied he kept an eye on me as if he was wondering if I was of any consequence, and if I could hinder him from crossing the road and getting away into the valley below where there was a regular wilderness of woods and underbrush.

If he does that, I thought, he will be gone in a minute and I shall lose him, and the hunt will be over. And for fear he would make for the hedge and jump over it, not minding me, I jerked out my handkerchief and shook it at him. You can't imagine how this frightened him. He turned sharp to the right, dashed up the hill, cleared a hedge and was gone. I gave a gasp and a scream as I saw him disappear. I believe I cried, but I didn't stop, and glad I was that I didn't; for in less than a minute I had come to a cross lane which led in the very direction the deer had taken. I turned into this lane and went on as fast as I could, and I soon found that it led through a thick wood. Down in the hollow, which I could not see into, I heard a barking and shouting, and I kept on just as fast as I could make that tricycle go. Where the lane led to, or what I should ever come to, I didn't think about. I was hunting a stag, and all I cared for was to feel my tricycle bounding beneath me.

I may have gone a half a mile or two miles—I have not an idea how far it was—when suddenly I came to a place where there was green grass and

rocks in an opening in the woods, and what a sight I saw! There was that beautiful, grand, red deer half down on his knees and perfectly quiet, and there was one of the men in red coats coming toward him with a great knife in his hand, and a little farther back was three or four dogs with another man, still on horseback, whipping them to keep them back, though they seemed willing enough to lie there with their tongues out, panting. As the man with the knife came up to the deer, the poor creature raised its eyes to him, and didn't seem to mind whether he came or not. It was trembling all over and fairly tired to death. When the man got near enough he took hold of one of the deer's horns and lifted up the hand with the knife in it, but he didn't bring it down on that deer's throat, I can tell you, madam, for I was there and had him by the arm.

He turned on me as if he had been struck by lightning.

"What do you mean?" he shouted. "Let go my arm."

"Don't you touch that deer," said I—my voice was so husky I could hardly speak—"don't you see it's surrendered? Can you have the heart to cut that beautiful throat when he is pleading for mercy?" The man's eyes looked as if they would burst out of his head. He gave me a pull and a push as if he would stick the knife

"IF YOU WAS A MAN I'D BREAK YOUR HEAD"

into me, and he actually swore at me, but I didn't mind that.

"You have got that poor creature now," said I, "and that's enough. Keep it and tame it and bring it up with your children." I didn't have time to say anything more, and he didn't have time to answer, for two of the dogs who had got a little of their wind back sprang up and made a jump at the stag; and he, having got a little of his wind back, jerked his horn out of the hand of the man, and giving a sort of side spring backward among the bushes and rocks, away he went, the dogs after him.

The man with the knife rushed out into the lane, and so did I, and so did the man on horseback, almost on top of me. On the other side of the lane was a little gorge with rocks and trees and water at the bottom of it, and I was just in time to see the stag spring over the lane and drop out of sight among the rocks and the moss and the vines.

The man stood and swore at me regardless of my sex, so violent was his rage.

"If you was a man I'd break your head," he yelled.

"I'm glad I'm not," said I, "for I wouldn't want my head broken. But what troubles me is, that I'm afraid that deer has broken his legs or hurt himself some way, for I never saw anything drop on rocks in such a reckless manner, and the poor thing so tired."

The man swore again, and said something about wishing somebody else's legs had been broken; and then he shouted to the man on horseback to call off the dogs, which was of no use, for he was doing it already. Then he turned on me again.

"You are an American," he shouted. "I might have known that. No English woman would ever have done such a beastly thing as that."

"You're mistaken there," I said; "there isn't a true English woman that lives who would not have done the same thing. Your mother——"

"Confound my mother!" yelled the man.

"All right," said I; "that's all in your family and none of my business." Then he went off raging to where he had left his horse by a gatepost.

The other man, who was a good deal younger and more friendly, came up to me and said he wouldn't like to be in my boots, for I had spoiled a pretty piece of sport; and then he went on and told me that it had been a bad hunt, for instead of starting only one stag, three or four of them had been started, and they had had a bad time, for the hounds and the hunters had been mixed up in a nasty way. And at last, when the master of the hounds and most every one else had gone off over Dunkery Hill, and he didn't know whether they was after two stags or one, he and his mate, who was both whippers-in, had gone to turn part of the pack that had broken away, and had found that these dogs was after another

stag, and so before they knew it they was in a hunt of their own, and they would have killed that stag if it had not been for me; and he said it was hard on his mate, for he knew he had it in mind that he was going to kill the only stag of the day.

He went on to say, that as for himself he wasn't so sorry, for this was Sir Skiddery Henchball's land, and when a stag was killed it belonged to the man whose land it died on. He told me that the master of the hunt gets the head and the antlers, and the huntsman some other part, which I forget, but the owner of the land, no matter whether he's in the hunt or not, gets the body of the stag. "There's a cottage not a mile down this lane," said he, "with its thatch torn off, and my sister and her children live there, and Sir Skiddery turned them out on account of the rent, and so I'm glad the old skinflint didn't get the venison." And then he went off, being called by the other man.

I didn't know what time it was, but it seemed as if it must be getting on into the afternoon; and feeling that my deer hunt was over, I thought I had better lose no time in hunting up Jone, so I followed on after the men and the dogs, who was going to the main road, but keeping a little back of them, though, for I didn't know what the older one might do if he happened to turn and see me.

I was sure that Jone had passed the little lane without seeing it, so I kept on the way we had been

going, and got up all the speed I could, though I must say I was dreadfully tired, and even trembling a little, for while I had been stag hunting I was so excited I didn't know how much work I was doing. There was sign-posts enough to tell me the way to Chedcombe, and so I kept straight on, up hill and down hill, until at last I saw a man ahead on a bicycle, which I soon knew to be Mr. Poplington. He was surprised enough at seeing me, and told me my husband had gone ahead. I didn't explain anything, and it wasn't until we got nearly to Chedcombe that we met Jone. He had been to Chedcombe, and was coming back.

Jone is a good fellow, but he's got a will of his own, and he said that this would be the end of my tricycle riding, and that the next time we went out together on wheels he'd drive. I didn't tell him anything about the stag hunt then, for he seemed to be in favor of doing all the talking himself; but after dinner, when we was all settled down quiet and comfortable, I told him and Mr. Poplington the story of the chase, and they both laughed, Mr. Poplington the most.

Letter Number Thirteen

CHEDCOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE

IT is now about a week since my stag hunt, and Jone and I have kept pretty quiet, taking short walks, and doing a good deal of reading in our garden whenever the sun shines into the little arbor there, and Mr. Poplington spends most of his time fishing. He works very hard at this, partly for the sake of his conscience, I think, for his bicycle trip made him lose three or four days he had taken a license for.

It was day before yesterday that rheumatism showed itself certain and plain in Jone. I had been thinking that perhaps I might have it first, but it wasn't so, and it began in Jone, which, though I don't want you to think me hard-hearted, madam, was perhaps better; for if it had not been for it, it might have been hard to get him out of this comfortable little cottage, where he'd be perfectly content to stay until it was time for us to sail for America. The beautiful greenness which spreads over the fields and hills, and not only the leaves of trees and vines, but down and around trunks and branches, is charming to look at and never to be

forgotten; but when this moist greenness spreads itself to one's bones, especially when it creeps up to the parts that work together, then the soul of man longs for less picturesqueness and more easy-going joints. Jone says the English take their climate as they do their whiskey; and he calls it climate-and-water, with a very little of the first and a good deal of the other.

Of course, we must now leave Chedcombe; and when we talked to Mr. Poplington about it he said there was two places the English went to for their rheumatism. One was Bath, not far from here, and the other was Buxton, up in the north. As soon as I heard of Bath I was on pins and needles to go there, for in all the novel-reading I've done, which has been getting better and better in quality since the days when I used to read dime novels on the canal-boat, up to now when I like the best there is, I could not help knowing lots about Evelina and Beau Brummel, and the Pump Room, and the fine ladies and young bucks, and it would have joyed my soul to live and move where all these people had been, and where all these things had happened, even if fictitiously.

But Mr. Poplington came down like a shower on my notions, and said that Bath was very warm, and was the place where everybody went for their rheumatism in winter; but that Buxton was the place for the summer, because it was on high land and cool.

This cast me down a good deal; for if we could have gone where I could have steeped my soul in romanticness, and at the same time Jone could have steeped himself in warm mineral water, there would not have been any time lost, and both of us would have been happier. But Mr. Poplington stuck to it that it would ruin anybody's constitution to go to such a hot place in August, and so I had to give it up.

So to-morrow we start for Buxton, which, from what I can make out, must be a sort of invalid picnic ground. I always did hate diseases and ailments, even of the mildest, when they go in caravan. I like to take people's sicknesses separate, because then I feel I might do something to help; but when they are bunched I feel as if it was sort of mean for me to go about cheerful and singing when other people was all grunting.

But we are not going straight to Buxton. As I have often said, Jone is a good fellow, and he told me last night if there was any bit of fancy scenery I'd like to stop on the way to the unromantic refuge he'd be glad to give me the chance, because he didn't suppose it would matter much if he put off his hot soaks for a few days. It didn't take me long to name a place I'd like to stop at—for most of my reading lately has been in the guide books, and I had crammed myself with the descriptions of places worth seeing, that would take us at least two

years to look at—so I said I would like to go to the River Wye, which is said to be the most romantic stream in England, and when that is said, enough is said for me, so Jone agreed, and we are going to do the Wye on our way north.

There is going to be an election here in a few days, and this morning Jone and me hobbled into the village—that is, he hobbled in body, and I did in mind to think of his going along like a creaky wheelbarrow.

Everybody was agog about the election, and we was looking at some placards posted against a wall, when Mr. Locky, the innkeeper, came along, and after bidding us good-morning he asked Jone what party he belonged to. "I'm a Home Ruler," said Jone, "especially in the matter of tricycles." Mr. Locky didn't understand the last part of this speech, but I did, and he said, "I am glad you are not a Tory, sir. If you will read that, you will see what the Tory party has done for us," and he pointed out some lines at the bottom of a green placard, and these was the words: "Remember it was the Tory party that lost us the United States of America."

"Well," said Jone, "that seems like going a long way off to get some stones to throw at the Tories, but I feel inclined to heave a rock at them myself for the injury that party has done to America."

"To America!" said Mr. Locky. "Did the Tories ever harm America?"

"Of course they did," said Jone; "they lost us England, a very valuable country, indeed, and a great loss to any nation. If it had not been for the

"I'm a Home Ruler"

Tory party, Mr. Gladstone might now be in Washington as a senator from Middlesex."

Mr. Locky didn't understand one word of this,

and so he asked Jone which leg his rheumatism was in; and when Jone told him it was his left leg he said it was a very curious thing, but if you would take a hundred men in Chedcombe there would be at least sixty with rheumatism in the left leg, and perhaps not more than twenty with it in the right, which was something the doctors never had explained yet.

It is awfully hard to go away and leave this lovely little cottage with its roses and vines, and Miss Pondar, and all its sweet-smelling comforts; and not only the cottage, but the village, and Mrs. Locky and her husband at the Bordley Arms, who couldn't have been kinder to us and more anxious to know what we wanted and what they could do. The fact is, that when English people do like Americans they go at it with just as much vim and earnestness as if they was helping Britannia to rule more waves.

While I was feeling badly at leaving Miss Pondar your letter came, dear madam, and I must say it gave heavy hearts to Jone and me, to me especially, as you can well understand. I went off into the summer-house, and as I sat there thinking and reading the letter over again, I do believe some tears came into my eyes; and Miss Pondar, who was working in the garden only a little way off—for if there is anything she likes to do it is to weed and fuss among the rose-bushes and other flowers, which she does whenever her other work gives her a chance—she happened to look up, and seeing that

I was in trouble, she came right to me, like the good woman she is, and asked me if I had heard bad news, and if I would like a little gin and water.

I said that I had had bad news, but that I did not want any spirits, and she said she hoped nothing had happened to any of my family, and I told her not exactly; but in looking back it seemed as if it was almost that way. I thought I ought to tell her what had happened, for I could see that she was really feeling for me, and so I said: "Poor Lord Edward is dead. To be sure, he was very old, and I suppose we had not any right to think he'd live even as long as he did; and as he was nearly blind and had very poor use of his legs it was, perhaps, better that he should go. But when I think of what friends we used to be before I was married, I can't help feeling badly to think that he has gone; that when I go back to America he will not show he is glad to see me home again, which he would be if there wasn't another soul on the whole continent who felt that way."

Miss Pondar was now standing up with her hands folded in front of her, and her head bowed down as if she was walking behind a hearse with eight ostrich plumes on it. "Lord Edward," she said, in a melancholy, respectful voice, "and will his remains be brought to England for interment?"

"Oh, no," said I, not understanding what she was talking about. "I am sure he will be buried some-

where near his home, and when I go back his grave will be one of the first places I will visit."

A streak of bewilderment began to show itself in Miss Pondar's melancholy respectfulness, and she said: "Of course, when one lives in foreign parts one may die there, but I always thought in cases like that they were brought home to their family vaults."

It may seem strange for me to think of anything funny at a time like this, but when Miss Pondar mentioned family vaults when talking of Lord Edward, there came into my mind the jumps he used to make whenever he saw any of us coming home; but I saw what she was driving at and the mistake she had made. "Oh," I said, "he was not a member of the British nobility; he was a dog; Lord Edward was his name. I never loved any animal as I loved him."

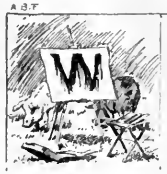
I suppose, madam, that you must sometimes have noticed one of the top candles of a chandelier, when the room gets hot, suddenly bending over and drooping and shedding tears of hot paraffine on the candles below, and perhaps on the table; and if you can remember what that overcome candle looked like, you will have an idea of what Miss Pondar looked like when she found out Lord Edward was a dog. I think that for one brief moment she hugged to her bosom the fond belief that I was intimate with the aristocracy, and that a noble lord, had he

not departed this life, would have been the first to welcome me home, and that she—she herself—was in my service. But the drop was an awful one. I could see the throes of mortified disappointment in her back, as she leaned over a bed of pinks, pulling out young plants, I am afraid, as well as weeds. When I looked at her, I was sorry I let her know it was a dog I mourned. She has tried so hard to make everything all right while we have been here, that she might just as well have gone on thinking that it was a noble earl who died.

To-morrow morning we shall have our last Devonshire clotted cream, for they tell me this is to be had only in the west of England, and when I think of the beautiful hills and vales of this country I shall not forget that.

Of course we would not have time to stay here longer, even if Jone hadn't got the rheumatism; but if he had to have it, for which I am as sorry as anybody can be, it is a lucky thing that he did have it just about the time that we ought to be going away, anyhow. And although I did not think, when we came to England, that we should ever go to Buxton, we are thankful that there is such a place to go to; although, for my part, I can't help feeling disappointed that the season isn't such that we could go to Bath, and Evelina and Beau Brummel.

Letter Number Fourteen



BELL HOTEL, GLOUCESTER

WE came to this queer old English town, not because it is any better than so many other towns, but because Mr. Poplington told us it was a good place for our headquarters while we was seeing the River Wye and other things in the neighborhood. This hotel is the best in the town and very well kept, so that Jone made his usual remark about its being a good place to stay in. We are near the point where the four principal streets of the town, called Northgate, Eastgate, Southgate, and Westgate, meet, and if there was nothing else to see it would be worth while to stand there and look at

so much Englishism coming and going from four different quarters.

There is another hotel here, called the New Inn, that was recommended to us, but I thought we would not want to go there, for we came to see old England, and I don't want to see its new and shiny things, so we came to the Bell, as being more antique. But I have since found out that the New Inn was built in 1450 to accommodate the pilgrims who came to pay their respects to the tomb of Edward II. in the fine old cathedral here. But though I should like to live in a four-hundred-and forty-year-old house, we are very well satisfied where we are.

Two very good things come from Gloucester, for it is the well-spring of Sunday schools and vaccination. They keep here the horns of the cow that Dr. Jenner first vaccinated from, and not far from our hotel is the house of Robert Raikes. This is an old-fashioned timber house, and looks like a man wearing his skeleton outside of his skin. We are sorry Mr. Poplington couldn't come here with us, for he could have shown us a great many things; but he stayed at Chedcombe to finish his fishing, and he said he might meet us at Buxton, where he goes every year for his arm.

To see the River Wye you must go down it, so with just one handbag we took the train for the little town of Ross, which is near the beginning of

the navigable part of the river—I might almost say the wadeable part, for I imagine the deepest soundings about Ross are not more than half a yard. We stayed all night at a hotel overlooking the valley of the little river, and as the best way to see this wonderful stream is to go down it in a rowboat, as soon as we reached Ross we engaged a boat and a man for the next morning to take us to Monmouth, which would be about a day's row, and give us the best part of the river. But I must say that when we looked out over the valley the prospect was not very encouraging, for it seemed to me that if the sun came out hot it would dry up that river, and Jone might not be willing to wait until the next heavy rain.

While we was at Chedcombe I read the "Maid of Sker," because its scenes are laid in the Bristol Channel, about the coast near where we was, and over in Wales. And when the next morning we went down to the boat which we was going to take our day's trip in, and I saw the man who was to row us, David Llewellyn popped straight into my mind.

This man was elderly, with gray hair, and a beard under his chin, with a general air of water and fish. He was good-natured and sociable from the very beginning. It seemed a shame that an old man should row two people so much younger than he was, but after I had looked at him pulling at his

oars for a little while, I saw that there was no need of pitying him.

It was a good day, with only one or two drizzles in the morning, and we had not gone far before I found that the Wye was more of a river than I thought it was, though never any bigger than a creek. It was just about warm enough for a boat trip, though the old man told us there had been a "rime" that morning, which made me think of the "Ancient Mariner." The more the boatman talked and made queer jokes, the more I wanted to ask him his name; and I hoped he would say David Llewellyn, or at least David, and as a sort of feeler I asked him if he had ever seen a coracle. "A corkle?" said he. "Oh, yes, ma'am, I've seen many a one and rowed in them."

I couldn't wait any longer, and so I asked him his name. He stopped rowing and leaned on his oars and let the boat drift. "Now," said he, "if you've got a piece of paper and a pencil I wish you would listen careful and put down my name, and if you ever know of any other people in your country coming to the River Wye, I wish you would tell them my name, and say I am a boatman, and can take them down the river better than anybody else that's on it. My name is Samivel Jones. Be sure you've got that right, please—Samivel Jones. I was born on this river, and I rowed on it with my father when I was a boy, and I have rowed on

it ever since, and now I am sixty-five years old. Do you want to know why this river is called the Wye? I will tell you. Wye means crooked, so this river is called the Wye because it is crooked. Wye, the crooked river."

There was no doubt about the old man's being right about the crookedness of the stream. If you have ever noticed an ant running over the floor you will have an idea how the Wye runs through this beautiful country. If it comes to a hill it doesn't just pass it and let you see one side of it, but it goes as far around it as it can, and then goes back again, and goes around some other hill or great rocky point, or a clump of woods, or anything else that travellers might like to see. At one place, called Symond's Yat, it makes a curve so great, that if we was to get out of our boat and walk across the land, we would have to walk less than half a mile before we came to the river again; but to row around the curve as we did, we had to go five miles.

Every now and then we came to rapids. I didn't count them, but I think there must have been about one to every mile, where the river-bed was full of rocks, and where the water rushed furiously around and over them. If we had been rowing ourselves we would have gone on shore and camped when we came to the first of these rapids, for we wouldn't have supposed our little boat could go through those tumbling, rushing waters; but old

Samivel knew exactly how the narrow channel, just deep enough sometimes for our boat to float without bumping the bottom, runs and twists itself among the hidden rocks, and he'd stand up in the bow and push the boat this way and that until it slid into the quiet water again, and he sat down to his oars. After we had been through four or five of these we didn't feel any more afraid than if we had been sitting together on our own little back porch.

As for the banks of this river, they got more and more beautiful as we went on. There was high hills with some castles, woods and crags and grassy slopes, and now and then a lordly mansion or two, and great massive, rocky walls, bedecked with vines and moss, rising high up above our heads and shutting us out from the world.

Jone and I was filled as full as our minds could hold with the romantic loveliness of the river and its banks, and old Samivel was so pleased to see how we liked it—for I believe he looked upon that river as his private property—that he told us about everything we saw, and pointed out a lot of things we wouldn't have noticed if it hadn't been for him, as if he had been a man explaining a panorama, and pointing out with a stick the notable spots as the canvas unrolled.

The only thing in his show which didn't satisfy him was two very fine houses which had both of

them belonged to noble personages in days gone by, but which had been sold, one to a man who had made his money in tea, and the other to a man who had made money in cotton. "Think of that," said he; "cotton and tea, and living in such mansions as them are, once owned by lords. They are both good men, and gives a great deal to the poor, and does all they can for the country; but only think of it, madam, cotton and tea! But all that happened a good while ago, and the world is getting too enlightened now for such estates as them are to come to cotton and tea."

Sometimes we passed houses and little settlements, but, for the most part, the country was as wild as undiscovered lands, which, being that to me, I felt happier, I am sure, than Columbus did when he first sighted floating weeds. Jone was a good deal wound up too, for he had never seen anything so beautiful as all this. We had our luncheon at a little inn, where the bread was so good that for a time I forgot the scenery, and then we went on, passing through the Forest of Dean, lonely and solemn, with great oak and beech trees, and Robin Hood and his merry men watching us from behind the bushes for all we knew. Whenever the river twists itself around, as if to show us a new view, old Samivel would say: "Now isn't that the prettiest thing you've seen yet?" and he got prouder and prouder of his river every mile he rowed.

At one place he stopped and rested on his oars. "Now, then," said he, twinkling up his face as if he was really David Llewellyn showing us a fish with its eyes bulged out with sticks to make it look fresh, "as we are out on a kind of a lark, suppose we try a bit of a hecho," and then he turned to a rocky valley on his left, and in a voice like the man at the station calling out the trains he yelled, "Hello there, sir! What are you doing there, sir? Come out of that!" And when the words came back as if they had been balls batted against a wall, he turned and looked at us as proud and grinny as if the rocks had been his own baby saying "papa" and "mamma" for visitors.

Not long after this we came to a place where there was a wide field on one side, and a little way off we could see the top of a house among the trees. A hedge came across the field to the river, and near the bank was a big gate, and on this gate sat two young women, and down on the ground on the side of the hedge nearest to us was another young woman, and not far from her was three black hogs, two of them pointing their noses at her and grunting, and the other was grunting around a place where those young women had been making sketches and drawings, and punching his nose into the easels and portfolios on the ground. The young woman on the grass was striking at the hogs with a stick and trying to make them go

away, which they wouldn't do; and just as we came near she dropped the stick and ran, and climbed up on the gate beside the others, after which all the hogs went to rooting among the drawing things.

As soon as Samivel saw what was going on he stopped his boat, and shouted to the hogs a great deal louder than he had shouted to the echo, but they didn't mind any more than they had minded the girl with the stick. "Can't we stop the boat," I said, "and get out and drive off those hogs? They will eat up all the papers and sketches."

"Just put me ashore," said Jone, "and I'll clear them out in no time;" and old Samivel rowed the boat close up to the bank.

But when Jone got suddenly up on his feet there was such a twitch across his face that I said to him, "Now just you sit down. If you go ashore to drive off those hogs you'll jump about so that you'll bring on such a rheumatism you can't sleep."

"I'll get out myself," said Samivel, "if I can find a place to fasten the boat to. I can't run her ashore here, and the current is strong."

"Don't you leave the boat," said I, for the thought of Jone and me drifting off and coming without him to one of those rapids sent a shudder through me; and as the stern of the boat where I sat was close to the shore I jumped with Jone's stick in my hand before either of them could hinder

me. I was so afraid that Jone would do it that I was very quick about it.

The minute I left the boat Jone got ready to come after me, for he had no notion of letting me be on shore by myself, but the boat had drifted off a little, and old Samivel said:

"That is a pretty steep bank to get up with the rheumatism on you. I'll take you a little farther down, where I can ground the boat, and you can get off more steadier."

But this letter is getting as long as the River Wye itself, and I must stop it.

Letter Number Fifteen

BELL HOTEL, GLOUCESTER

As soon as I jumped on shore, as I told you in my last, and had taken a good grip on Jone's heavy stick, I went for those hogs, for I wanted to drive them off before Jone came ashore, for I didn't want him to think he must come.

I have driven hogs and cows out of lots and yards often enough, as you know yourself, madam, so I just stepped up to the biggest of them and hit him a whack across the head as he was rubbing his nose in among some papers with bits of landscapes on them, as was enough to make him give up studying art for the rest of his life; but would you believe it, madam, instead of running away he just made a bolt at me, and gave me such a push with his head and shoulders he nearly knocked me over? I never was so astonished, for they looked like hogs that you might think could be chased out of a yard by a boy. But I gave the fellow another crack on the back, which he didn't seem to notice, but just turned again to give me another push, and at the same minute the two others stopped rooting among the paint-boxes and came grunting at me.

For the first time in my life I was frightened by

hogs. I struck at them as hard as I could, and before I knew what I was about I flung down the stick, made a rush for that gate, and was on top of it in no time, in company with the three other young women that was sitting there already.

"Really," said the one next to me, "I fancied you was going to be gored to atoms before our eyes. Whatever made you go to those nasty beasts?"

I looked at her quite severe, getting my feet well up out of reach of the hogs if they should come near us.

"I saw you was in trouble, miss, and I came to help you. My husband wanted to come, but he has the rheumatism and I wouldn't let him."

The other two young women looked at me as well as they could around the one that was near me, and the one that was farthest off said:

"If the creatures could have been driven off by a woman, we could have done it ourselves. I don't know why you should think you could do it any better than we could."

I must say, madam, that at that minute I was a little humble-minded, for I don't mind confessing to you that the idea of one American woman plunging into a conflict that had frightened off three English women, and coming out victorious, had a good deal to do with my trying to drive away those hogs; and now that I had come out of the little end

of the horn, just as the young women had, I felt pretty small, but I wasn't going to let them see that.

"I think that English hogs," said I, "must be savager than American ones. Where I live there is not any kind of a hog that would not run away if I shook a stick at him." The young woman at the other end of the gate now spoke again.

"Everything British is braver than anything American," said she; "and all you have done has been to vex those hogs, and they are chewing up our drawing things worse than they did before."

Of course I fired up at this, and said, "You are very much mistaken about Americans." But before I could say any more she went on to tell me that she knew all about Americans; she had been in America, and such a place she could never have fancied.

"Over there you let everybody trample over you as much as they please. You have no conveniences. One cannot even get a cab. Fancy! Not a cab to be had unless one pays enough for a drive in Hyde Park."

I must say that the hogs charging down on me didn't astonish me any more than to find myself on top of a gate with a young woman charging on my country in this fashion, and it was pretty hard on me to have her pitch into the cab question, because Jone and me had had quite a good deal to say about

cabs ourselves, comparing New York and London, without any great fluttering of the stars and stripes; but I wasn't going to stand any such talk as that, and so I said:

"I know very well that our cab charges are high, and it is not likely that poor people coming from other countries are able to pay them; but as soon as our big cities get filled up with wretched, half-starved people, with the children crying for bread at home, and the father glad enough that he's able to get people to pay him a shilling for a drive, and that he's not among the hundreds and thousands of miserable men who have not any work at all, and go howling to Hyde Park to hold meetings for blood or bread, then we will be likely to have cheap cabs as you have."

"How perfectly awful!" said the young woman nearest me; but the one at the other end of the gate didn't seem to mind what I said, but shifted off on another track.

"And then there's your horses' tails," said she; "anything nastier couldn't be fancied. Hundreds of them everywhere with long tails down to their heels, as if they belong to heathens who had never been civilized."

"Heathens?" said I. "If you call the Arabians heathens, who have the finest horses in the world, and wouldn't any more think of cutting off their tails than they would think of cutting their legs off;

and if you call the cruel scoundrels who torture their poor horses by sawing their bones apart so as to get a little stuck-up bob on behind, like a moth-eaten paint-brush—if you call them Christians, then I suppose you're right. There is a law in some parts of our country against the wickedness of chopping off the tails of live horses, and if you had such a law here you'd be a good deal more Christian-like than you are, to say nothing of getting credit for decent taste."

By this time I had forgotten all about what Jone and I had agreed upon as to arguing over the differences between countries, and I was just as peppery as a wasp. The young woman at the other end of the gate was rather waspy too, for she seemed to want to sting me wherever she could find a spot uncovered; and now she dropped off her horses' tails, and began to laugh until her face got purple.

"You Americans are so awfully odd," she said. "You say you raise your corn and your plants instead of growing them. It nearly makes me die laughing when I hear one of you Americans say raise when you mean grow."

Now Jone and me had some talk about growing and raising, and the reasons for and against our way of using the words; but I was ready to throw all this to the winds, and was just about to tell the impudent young woman that we raised our plants just the same as we raised our children, leaving them to

"AND WITH A SCREECH I DASHED AT THOSE HOGS LIKE A STEAM ENGINE."

do their own growing, when the young woman in the middle of the three, who up to this time hadn't said a word, screamed out:

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! He's pulled out my drawing of Wilton Bridge. He'll eat it up. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Whatever shall I do?"

Instead of speaking I turned quick and looked at the hogs, and there, sure enough, one of them had rooted open a portfolio and had hold of the corners of a colored picture, which, from where I sat, I could see was perfectly beautiful. The sky and the trees and the water was just like what we ourselves had seen a little while ago, and in about half a minute that hog would chew it up and swallow it.

The young woman next to me had an umbrella in her hand. I made a snatch at this and dropped off that gate like a shot. I didn't stop to think about anything except that beautiful picture was on the point of being swallowed up, and with a screech I dashed at those hogs like a steam engine. When they saw me coming with my screech and the umbrella they didn't stop a second, but with three great wiggles and three scared grunts they bolted as fast as they could go. I picked up the picture of the bridge, together with the portfolio, and took them to the young woman who owned them. As the hogs had gone, all three of the women was now getting down from the gate.

"Thank you very much," she said, "for saving

my drawings. It was awfully good of you, especially——"

"Oh, you are welcome," said I, cutting her off short; and, handing the other young woman her umbrella, I passed by the impudent one without so much as looking at her, and on the other side of the hedge I saw Jone coming across the grass. I jerked open the gate, not caring who it might swing against, and walked to meet Jone. When I was near enough I called out to know what on earth had become of him that he had left me there so long by myself, forgetting that I hadn't wanted him to come at all; and he told me that he had had a hard time getting on shore, because they found the banks very low and muddy, and when he had landed he was on the wrong side of a hedge, and had to walk a good way around it.

"I was troubled," said he, "because I thought you might come to grief with the hogs."

"Hogs!" said I, so sarcastic, that Jone looked hard at me, but I didn't tell him anything more till we was in the boat, and then I just said right out what had happened. Jone couldn't help laughing.

"If I had known," said he, "that you was on top of a gate discussing horses' tails and cabs I wouldn't have felt in such a hurry to get to you."

"And you would have made a mistake if you hadn't," I said, "for hogs are nothing to such a person as was on that gate."

Old Samivel was rowing slow and looking troubled, and I believe at that minute he forgot the River Wye was crooked.

"That was really hard, madam," he said, "really hard on you; but it was a woman, and you have to excuse women. Now if they had been three Englishmen sitting on that gate they would never have said such things to you, knowing that you was a stranger in these parts and had come on shore to do them a service. And now, madam, I'm glad to see you are beginning to take notice of the landscapes again. Just ahead of us is another bend, and when we get around that you'll see the prettiest picture you've seen yet. This is a crooked river, madam, and that's how it got its name. Wye means crooked."

After a while we came to a little church near the river bank, and here Samivel stopped rowing, and putting his hands on his knees he laughed gayly.

"It always makes me laugh," he said, "whenever I pass this spot. It seems to me like such an awful good joke. Here's that church on this side of the river, and away over there on the other side of the river is the rector and the congregation."

"And how do they get to church?" said I.

"In the summer time," said he, "they come over with a ferry-boat and a rope; but in the winter, when the water is frozen, they can't get over at all. Many's the time I've lain in bed and laughed and

laughed when I thought of this church on one side of the river, and the whole congregation and the rector on the other side, and not able to get over."

Toward the end of the day, and when we had rowed nearly twenty miles, we saw in the distance the town of Monmouth, where we was going to stop for the night.

Old Samivel asked us what hotel we was going to

"In the winter, when the water is frozen, they can't get over"

stop at, and when we told him the one we had picked out he said he could tell us a better one.

"If I was you," he said, "I'd go to the Eyengel." We didn't know what this name meant, but as the old man said he would take us there we agreed to go.

"I should think you would have a lonely time rowing back by yourself," I said.

"Rowing back?" said he. "Why, bless your

soul, lady, there isn't nobody who could row this boat back agen that current and up them rapids. We take the boats back with the pony. We put the boat on a wagon and the pony pulls it back to Ross; and as for me, I generally go back by the train. It isn't so far from Monmouth to Ross by the road, for the road is straight and the river winds and bends."

The old man took us to the inn which he recommended, and we found it was the Angel. It was a nice, old-fashioned, queer English house. As far as I could see, they was all women that managed it, and it couldn't have been managed better; and as far as I could see, we was the only guests, unless there was "commercial gents," who took themselves away without our seeing them.

We was sorry to have old Samivel leave us, and we bid him a most friendly good-by, and promised if we ever knew of anybody who wanted to go down the River Wye we would recommend them to ask at Ross for Samivel Jones to row them.

We found the landlady of the Angel just as good to us as if we had been her favorite niece and nephew. She hired us a carriage the next day, and we as driven out to Raglan Castle, through miles and miles of green and sloping ruralness. When we got there and rambled through those grand old ruins, with the drawbridge and the tower and the courtyard, my soul went straight back to the days

of knights and ladies, and prancing steeds, and horns and hawks, and pages and tournaments, and wild revels and vaulted halls.

The young man who had charge of the place seemed glad to see how much we liked it, as is natural enough, for everybody likes to see us pleased with the particular things they have on hand.

"You haven't anything like this in your country," said he. But to this I said nothing, for I was tired of always hearing people speak of my national denomination as if I was something in tin cans, with a label pasted on outside; but Jone said it was true enough that we didn't have anything like it, for if we had such a noble edifice we would have taken care of it, and not let it go to rack and ruin in this way.

Jone has an idea that it don't show good sense to knock a bit of furniture about from garret to cellar until most of its legs are broken, and its back cracked, and its varnish all peeled off, and then tie ribbons around it, and hang it up in the parlor, and kneel down to it as a relic of the past. He says that people who have got old ruins ought to be very thankful that there is any of them left, but it's no use in them trying to fill up the missing parts with brag.

We took the train and went to Chepstow, which is near the mouth of the Wye, and as the railroad ran near the river nearly all the way we had lots of

beautiful views, though, of course, it wasn't anything like as good as rowing along the stream in a boat. The next day we drove to the celebrated Tintern Abbey, and on the way the road passed two miles and a half of high stone wall, which shut in a gentleman's place. What he wanted to keep in or keep out by means of a wall like that, we couldn't imagine; but the place made me think of a lunatic asylum.

The road soon became shady and beautiful, running through woods along the river bank and under some great crags called the Wyndcliffe, and then we came to the Abbey and got out.

Of all the beautiful high-pointed archery of ancient times, this ruined Abbey takes the lead. I expect you've seen it, madam, or read about it, and I am not going to describe it; but I will just say that Jone, who had rather objected to coming out to see any more old ruins, which he never did fancy, and only came because he wouldn't have me come by myself, was so touched up in his soul by what he saw there, and by wandering through this solemn and beautiful romance of bygone days, he said he wouldn't have missed it for fifty dollars.

We came back to Gloucester to-day, and to-morrow we are off for Buxton. As we are so near Stratford and Warwick and all that, Jone said we'd better go there on our way, but I wouldn't agree to it. I am too anxious to get him skipping round

like a colt, as he used to, to stop anywhere now, and when we come back I can look at Shakespeare's tomb with a clearer conscience.

LONDON.

After all, the weather isn't the only changeable thing in this world, and this letter, which I thought I was going to send to you from Gloucester, is now being finished in London. We was expecting to start for Buxton, but some money that Jone had ordered to be sent from London two or three days before didn't come, and he thought it would be wise for him to go and look after it. So yesterday, which was Saturday, we started off for London, and came straight to the Babylon Hotel, where we had been before.

Of course we couldn't do anything until Monday, and this morning when we got up we didn't feel in very good spirits, for of all the doleful things I know of, a Sunday in London is the dolefullest. The whole town looks as if it was the back door of what it was the day before, and if you want to get any good out of it, you feel as if you had to sneak in by an alley, instead of walking boldly up the front steps.

Jone said we'd better go to Westminster Abbey to church, because he believed in getting the best there was when it didn't cost too much, but I wouldn't do it.

"No," said I. "When I walk in that religious nave and into the hallowed precincts of the talented

"Who do you suppose we met? Mr. Poplington!"

departed, the stone passages are full of cloudy forms of Chaucers, Addisons, Miltons, Dickenses,

and all those great ones of the past; and I would hate to see the place filled up with a crowd of weekday lay people in their Sunday clothes, which would be enough to wipe away every feeling of romantic piety which might rise within my breast."

As we didn't go to the Abbey, and was so long making up our minds where we should go, it got too late to go anywhere, and so we stayed in the hotel and looked out into a lonely and deserted street, with the wind blowing the little leaves and straws against the tight-shut doors of the forsaken houses. As I stood by that window I got homesick, and at last I could stand it no longer, and I said to Jone, who was smoking and reading a paper:

"Let's put on our hats and go out for a walk, for I can't mope here another minute."

So down we went, and coming up the front steps of the front entrance who do you suppose we met? Mr. Poplington! He was stopping at that hotel, and was just coming home from church, with his face shining like a sunset on account of the comfortableness of his conscience after doing his duty.

Letter Number Sixteen

BUXTON

WHEN I mentioned Mr. Poplington in my last letter in connection with the setting sun I was wrong; he was like the rising orb of day, and he filled London with effulgent light. No sooner had we had a talk, and we had told him all that had happened, and finished up by saying what a doleful morning we had had, than he clapped his hand on his knees and said, "I'll tell you what we will do. We will spend the afternoon among the landmarks." And what we did was to take a four-wheeler and go around the old parts of London, where Mr. Poplington showed us a lot of soul-awakening spots which no common stranger would be likely to find for himself.

If you are ever steeped in the solemnness of a London Sunday, and you can get a jolly, red-faced, middle-aged English gentleman, who has made himself happy by going to church in the morning, and is ready to make anybody else happy in the afternoon, just stir him up in the mixture, and then you will know the difference between cod-liver oil and champagne, even if you have never tasted either of them. The afternoon was piled-up-and-

pressed-down joyfulness for me, and I seemed to be walking in a dream among the beings and the things that we only see in books.

Mr. Poplington first took us to the old Watergate, which was the river entrance to York House, where Lord Bacon lived, and close to the gate was the small house where Peter the Great and David Copperfield lived, though not at the same time; and then we went to Will's old coffee-house, where Addison, Steele, and a lot of other people of that sort used to go to drink and smoke before they was buried in Westminster Abbey, and where Charles and Mary Lamb lived afterward, and where Mary used to look out of the window to see the constables take the thieves to the Old Bailey near by. Then we went to Tom-all-alone's, and saw the very grating at the head of the steps which led to the old graveyard where poor Joe used to sweep the steps when Lady Dedlock came there, and I held on to the very bars that the poor lady must have gripped when she knelt on the steps to die.

Not far away was the Black Jack Tavern, where Jack Sheppard and all the great thieves of the day used to meet. And bless me! I have read so much about Jack Sheppard that I could fairly see him jumping out of the window he always dropped from when the police came. After that we saw the house where Mr. Tulkinghorn, Lady Dedlock's lawyer, used to live, and also the house

where old Krook was burned up by spontaneous combustion. Then we went to Bolt Court, where old Samuel Johnson lived, walked about, and talked, and then to another court where he lived when he wrote the dictionary, and after that to the "Cheshire Cheese" Inn, where he and Oliver Goldsmith often used to take their meals together.

Then we saw St. John's Gate, where the Knights Templars met, and the yard of the Court of Chancery, where little Miss Flite used to wait for the Day of Judgment; and as we was coming home he showed us the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, where every other Friday the bells are rung at five o'clock in the afternoon, most people not knowing what it is for, but really because the famous Nell Gwynn, who was far from being a churchwoman, left a sum of money for having a merry peal of bells rung every Friday until the end of the world. I got so wound up by all this, that I quite forgot Jone, and hardly thought of Mr. Poplington, except that he was telling me all these things, and bringing back to my mind so much that I had read about, though sometimes very little.

When we got back to the hotel and had gone up to our room, Jone said to me:

"That was all very fine and interesting from top to toe, but it does seem to me as if things were dreadfully mixed. Dr. Johnson and Jack Sheppard,

I suppose, was all real and could live in houses; but when it comes to David Copperfields and Lady Dedlocks and little Miss Flites, that wasn't real and never lived at all, they was all talked about in just the same way, and their favorite tramping grounds pointed out, and I can't separate the real people from the fancy folk, if we've got to have the same bosom heaving for the whole of them."

"Jone," said I, "they are all real, every one of them. If Mr. Dickens had written history I expect he'd put Lady Dedlock and Miss Flite and David Copperfield into it; and if the history writers had written stories they would have been sure to get Dr. Johnson and Lord Bacon and Peter the Great into them; and the people in the one kind of writing would have been just as real as the people in the other. At any rate, that's the way they are to me."

On the Monday after our landmark expedition with Mr. Poplington, which I shall never forget, Jone settled up his business matters, and the next day we started for Buxton and the rheumatism baths. To our great delight Mr. Poplington said he would go with us, not all the way, for he wanted to stop at a little place called Rowsley, where he would stay for a few days and then go on to Buxton; but we was very glad to have him with us during the greater part of the way, and we all left the hotel in the same four-wheeler.

When we got to the station Jone got first-class tickets, for we have found out that if you want to travel comfortable in England, and have porters attend to your baggage and find an empty carriage for you, and have the guard come along and smile in the window and say he'll try to let you have that carriage all to yourselves if he's able—the ableness depending a good deal on what you give him—and for everybody to do their best to make your journey pleasant, you must travel first class. Mr. Poplington also bought a first-class ticket, for there was no seconds on this line. As we was walking along by the platform Jone and I gave a sort of a jump, for there was a regular Pullman car, which made us think we might be at home. We stopped and looked at it, and then the guard, who was standing by, stepped up to us and touched his hat, and asked us if we would like to take the Pullman, and when Jone asked what the extra charge was, he said nothing at all for first-class passengers. We didn't have to stop to think a minute, but said right off that we would go in it, but Mr. Poplington would not come with us. He said English people wasn't accustomed to that, they wanted to be more private; and, although he'd like to be with us, he could not travel in a caravan like that, and so he went off by himself, and we got into the Pullman.

The guard said we could take any seats we pleased;

and when we got in we found there was only two or three people in it, and we chose two nice arm-chairs, hung up our wraps, and made ourselves comfortable and cosey.

We expected that the people who engaged seats would soon come crowding in, but when the train started there was only four people besides ourselves in that beautiful car, which was a first-class one, built in the United States, with all sorts of comforts and conveniences. There was a porter who laid himself out to make us happy, and about one o'clock we had a nice lunch on a little table which was set up between us, with two waiters to attend to us, and then Jone went and had a smoke in a small room at one end of the car.

We thought it was strange that there should be so few people travelling on this train, but when we came to a town where we made a long stop Jone got out to talk to Mr. Poplington, supposing it likely that he'd have a carriage to himself; but he was amazed to see that the train was jammed and crowded, and he found Mr. Poplington squeezed up in a carriage with seven other people, four of them one side and four the other, each row staring into the faces of the other. . Some of them was eating bread and cheese out of paper parcels, and a big fat man was reading a newspaper, which he spread out so as to partly cover the two people sitting next to him, and all of them seemed anxious to

find some way of stretching their legs so as not to strike against the legs of somebody else.

Mr. Poplington was sitting by the window, and Jone couldn't help laughing when he said:

"Is this what you call being private, sir? I think you would find a caravan more pleasant. Don't you want to come to the Pullman with us? There are plenty of seats there, nice big armchairs that you can turn around and sit any way you like, and look at people or not look at them, just as you please, and there's plenty of room to walk about and stretch yourself a little if you want to. There's a smoking-room, too, that you can go to and leave whenever you like. Come and try it."

"Thank you very much," said Mr. Poplington, "but I really couldn't do that. I am not prejudiced at all, and I have a good many democratic ideas, but that is too much for me. An Englishman's house is his castle, and when he's travelling his railway carriage is his house. He likes privacy and dislikes publicity."

"This is a funny kind of privacy you have here," said Jone. "And how about your big clubs? Would you like to have them all divided up into little compartments with half a dozen men in each one, generally strangers to each other?"

"Oh, a club is a very different thing," said Mr. Poplington.

Jone was going to talk more about the comfort of the Pullman cars, but they began to shut the carriage doors, and he had to come back to me.

We like English railway carriages very well when we can have one to ourselves, but if even one stranger gets in and has to sit looking at us for all the rest of the trip you don't feel anything like as private as if you was walking along a sidewalk in London.

But Jone and I both agreed we wouldn't find any fault with English people for not liking Pullman cars, so long as they put them on their trains for Americans who do like them. And one thing is certain, that if our railroad conductors and brakesmen and porters was as polite and kind as they are in England, tips or no tips, we'd be a great deal better off than we are.

Whenever we stopped at a station the people would come and look through the windows at us, as if we was some sort of a travelling show. I don't believe most of them had ever seen a comfortable room on wheels before. The other people in our car was all men, and looked as if they hadn't their families with them, and was glad to get a little comfort on the sly. When we got to Rowsley we saw Mr. Poplington on the platform, running about, collecting all his different bits of luggage, and counting them to see that they was all there, and then, as we had a window open and was looking

out, he came and bid us good-by; and when I asked him to, he looked into our car.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" he said. "What a public apartment! I could not travel like that, you know. Good-by; I will see you at Buxton in a few days."

We talked a good deal with Mr. Poplington about the hotels of Buxton, and we had agreed to go to

Mr. Poplington looking for the luggage

one called the Old Hall, where we are now. There was a good many reasons why we chose this house, one being that it was not as expensive as some of the others, though very nice; and another, which had a good deal of force with me, was, that Mary Queen of Scots came here for her rheumatism, and the room she used to have is still kept, with some words she scratched with her diamond ring on the

window-pane. Sometimes people coming to this hotel can get this room, and I was mighty sorry we couldn't do it, but it was taken. If I could have actually lived and slept in a room which had belonged to the beautiful Mary Queen of Scots, I would have been willing to have just as much rheumatism as she had when she was here.

Of course, modern rheumatisms are not as interesting as the rheumatisms people of the past ages had; but from what I have seen of this town, I think I am going to like it very much.

Letter Number Seventeen

BUXTON

HEN we were comfortably settled here, Jone went to see a doctor, who is a nice, kind old gentleman, who looks as if he almost might have told Mary Queen of Scots how hot she ought to have the water in her baths. He charges four times as much as the others, and has about a quarter as many patients, which makes it all the same to him, and a good deal better for the rheumatic ones who come to him, for they have more time to go into particulars. And if anything does good to a person who has something the matter with him, it's being able to go into particulars about it. It's often as good as medicine, and always more comforting.

We unpacked our trunks and settled ourselves down for a three weeks' stay here, for no matter how much rheumatism you have or how little, you've got to take Buxton and its baths in three weeks' doses.

Besides taking the baths Jone has to drink the waters, and as I cannot do much else to help him, I am encouraging him by drinking them too. There are two places where you can get the lukewarm water that people come here to drink. One is the public well, where there is a pump free to everybody, and the other is in the pump-room just across the street from the well, where you pay a penny a glass for the same water, which three doleful old women spend all their time pumping for visitors.

Pomona encourages Jonas

People are ordered to drink this water very carefully. It must be done at regular times, beginning with a little, and taking more and more each day until you get to a full tumbler, and then if it seems to be too strong for you, you must take less. So far as I can find out there is nothing particular about it, except that it is lukewarm water, neither hot enough nor cold enough to make it a pleasant drink. It didn't seem to agree with Jone at first, but after he kept at it three or four days it began to suit him better, so that he could take nearly a tumbler without feeling badly. Two

or three times I felt it might be better for my health if I didn't drink it, but I wanted to stand by Jone as much as I could, and so I kept on.

We have been here a week now, and this morning I found out that all the water we drink at this hotel is brought from the well of St. Ann, where the public pump is, and everybody drinks just as much of it as they want whenever they want to, and they never think of any such thing as feeling badly or better than if it was common water. The only difference is, that it isn't quite as lukewarm when we get it here as it is at the well. When I was told this I was real mad, after all the measuring and fussing we had had when taking the water as a medicine, and then drinking it just as we pleased at the table. But the people here tell me that it is the gas in it which makes it medicinal, and when that floats out it is just like common water. That may be; but if there's a penny's worth of gas in every tumbler of water sold in the pump-room, there ought to be some sort of a canopy put over the town to catch what must escape in the pourings and pumpings, for it's too valuable to be allowed to get away. If it's the gas that does it, a rheumatic man anchored in a balloon over Buxton, and having the gas coming up unmixed to him, ought to be well in about two days.

When Jone told me his first bath was to be heated up to ninety-four degrees I said to him that he'd be

boiled alive, but he wasn't; and when he came home he said he liked it. Everything is very systematic in the great bathing-house. The man who tends to Jone hangs up his watch on a little stand on the edge of the bathtub, and he stays in just so many minutes, and when he's ready to come out he rings a bell, and then he's wrapped up in about fourteen hot towels, and sits in an armchair until he's dry. Jone likes all this, and says so much about it that it makes me want to try it too; though as there isn't any reason for it I haven't tried them yet.

This is an awfully queer, old-fashioned town, and must have been a good deal like Bath in the days of Evelina. There is a long line of high buildings curved like a half moon, which is called the Crescent, and at one end of this is a pump-room, and at the other are the natural baths, where the water is just as warm as when it comes out of the ground, which is eighty-two degrees. This is said to chill people; but from what I remember about summer time I don't see how eighty-two degrees can be cold.

Opposite the Crescent is a public park called The Slopes, and farther on there are great gardens with pavilions, and a band of music every day, and a theatre, and a little river, and tennis courts, and all sorts of things for people who haven't anything to do with their time, which is generally the case with folks at rheumatic watering-places. Opposite to our

hotel is a bowling court, which they say has been there for hundreds of years, and is just as hard and smooth as a boy's slate. The men who play bowls here are generally those who have got over the rheumatism of their youth, and whose joints have not been very much stiffened up yet by old age. The people who are yet too young for rheumatism, and have come here with their families, play tennis.

The baths take such a little time, not over six or seven minutes for them each day, and every third day skipped, that there is a good deal of time left on the hands of the people here; and those who can't play tennis or bowl, and don't want to spend the whole time in the pavilion listening to the music, go about in bath-chairs, which, so far as I can see, are just as important as the baths. I don't know whether you ever saw a bath-chair, madam, but it's a comfortable little cab on three wheels, pulled by a man. They take people everywhere, and all the streets are full of them.

As soon as I saw these nice little traps I said to Jone, "Now this is the very thing for you. It hurts you to walk far, and you want to see all over this town, and one of these bath-chairs will take you into lots of places where you couldn't go in a carriage."

"Take me!" said Jone. "I should say not. You don't catch me being hauled about in one of those

things as if I was in a sort of wheelbarrow ambulance being taken to the hospital, with you walking along by my side like a trained nurse. No, indeed! I have not gone so far as that yet."

I told him this was all stuff and nonsense, and if he wanted to get the good out of Buxton he'd better go about and see it, and he couldn't go about if he didn't take a bath-chair; but all he said to that was, that he could see it without going about, and he was satisfied. But that didn't count anything with me, for the trouble with Jone is, that he's too easy satisfied.

It's true that there is a lot to be seen in Buxton without going about. The Slopes are just across the street from the hotel, and when it doesn't happen to be raining we can go and sit there on a bench and see lively times enough. People are being trundled about in their bath-chairs in every direction; there is always a crowd at St. Ann's well, where the pump is; all sorts of cabs and carts are being driven up and down just as fast as they can go, for the streets are as smooth as floors, and in the morning and evening there are about half a dozen coaches with four horses, and drivers and horn-blowers in red coats, the horses prancing and whips cracking as they start out for country trips or come back again. And as for the people on foot, they just swarm like bees, and rain makes no difference, except that then they wear mackintoshes, and when

it's fine they don't. Some of these people step along as brisk as if they hadn't anything the matter with them, but a good many of them help out their legs with canes and crutches. I begin to think I can tell how long a man has been at Buxton by the number of sticks he uses.

One day we was sitting on a bench in The Slopes, enjoying a bit of sunshine that had just come along, when a middle-aged man, with a very high collar and a silk hat, came and sat down by Jone. He spoke civilly to us, and then went on to say that if ever we happened to take a house near Liverpool he'd be glad to supply us with coals, because he was a coal merchant. Jone told him that if he ever did take a house near Liverpool he certainly would give him his custom. Then the man gave us his card. "I come here every year," he said, "for the rheumatism in my shoulder, and if I meet anybody that lives near Liverpool, or is likely to, I try to get his custom. I like it here. There's a good many 'otels in this town. You can see a lot of them from here. There's St. Ann's, that's a good house, but they charge you a pound a day; and then there's the Old Hall. That's good enough, too, but nobody goes there except shopkeepers and clergymen. Of course, I don't mean bishops; they go to St. Ann's."

I wondered which the man would think Jone was, if he knew we was stopping at the Old Hall; but I didn't ask him, and only said that other people

besides shopkeepers and clergymen went to the Old Hall, for Mary Queen of Scots used to stop at that house when she came to take the waters, and her room was still there, just as it used to be.

"Mary Queen of Scots!" said he. "At the Old Hall?"

"Yes," said I, "that's where she used to go; that was her hotel."

"Queen Mary, Queen of the Scots!" he said again. "Well, well, I wouldn't have believed it. But them Scotch people always was close-fisted. Now if it had been Queen Elizabeth, she wouldn't have minded a pound a day;" and then, after asking Jone to excuse him for forgetting his manners and not asking where his rheumatism was, and having got his answer, he went away, wondering, I expect, how Mary Queen of Scots could have been so stingy.

But although we could see so much sitting on benches, I didn't give up Jone and the bath-chairs, and day before yesterday I got the better of him. "Now," said I, "it is stupid for you to be sitting around in this way as if you was a statue of a public benefactor carved by subscription and set up in a park. The only sensible thing for you to do is to take a bath-chair and go around and see things. And if you are afraid people will think you are being taken to a hospital, you can put down the top of the thing, and sit up straight and smoke your pipe. Patients in ambulances never smoke pipes.

And if you don't want me walking by your side like a trained nurse, I'll take another chair and be pulled along with you."

The idea of a pipe, and me being in another chair, rather struck his fancy, and he said he would consider it; and so that afternoon we went to the hotel door and looked at the long line of bath-chairs standing at the curbstone on the other side of the street, with the men waiting for jobs. The chairs was all pretty much alike and looked very comfortable, but the men was as different as if they had been horses. Some looked gay and spirited, and others tired and worn out, as if they had belonged to sporting men and had been driven half to death. And then again there was some that looked fat and lazy, like the old horses on a farm, that the women drive to town.

Jone picked out a good man, who looked as if he was well broken and not afraid of locomotives and able to do good work in single harness. When I got Jone in the bath-chair, with the buggy-top down, and his pipe lighted, and his hat cocked on one side a little, so as to look as if he was doing the whole thing for a lark, I called another chair, not caring what sort of one it was, and then we told the men to pull us around for a couple of hours, leaving it to them to take us to agreeable spots, which they said they would do.

After we got started Jone seemed to like it very

well, and we went pretty much all over the town, sometimes stopping to look in at the shop windows, for the sidewalks are so narrow that it is no trouble to see the things from the street. Then the men took us a little way out of the town to a place where there was a good view for us, and a bench where they could go and sit down and rest. I expect all the chair men that work by the hour manage to get to this place with a view as soon as they can.

After they had had a good rest we started off to go home by a different route. Jone's man was a good strong fellow and always took the lead, but my puller was a different kind of a steed, and sometimes I was left pretty far behind. I had not paid much attention to the man at first, only noticing that he was mighty slow; but going back a good deal of the way was uphill, and then all his imperfections came out plain, and I couldn't help studying him. If he had been a horse I should have said he was spavined and foundered, with split frogs and tonsilitis; but as he was a man, it struck me that he must have had several different kinds of rheumatism and been sent to Buxton to have them cured, but not taking the baths properly, or drinking the water at times when he ought not to have done it, his rheumatisms had all run together and had become fixed and immovable. How such a creaky person came to be a bath-chair man I could not

think, but it may be that he wanted to stay in Buxton for the sake of the loose gas which could be had for nothing, and that bath-chairing was all he could get to do.

I pitied the poor old fellow, who, if he had been a horse, would have been no more than fourteen hands high, and as he went puffing along, tugging and grunting as if I was a load of coal, I felt as if I couldn't stand it another minute, and I called out to him to stop. It did seem as if he would drop before he got me back to the hotel, and I bounced out in no time, and then I walked in front of him and turned around and looked at him. If it is possible for a human hack-horse to have spavins in two joints in each leg, that man had them ; and he looked as if he couldn't remember what it was to have a good feed.

He seemed glad to rest, but didn't say anything, standing and looking straight ahead of him like an old horse that has been stopped to let him blow. He did look so dreadful feeble that I thought it would be a mercy to take him to some member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and have him chloroformed. "Look here," said I, "you are not fit to walk. Get into that bath-chair, and I'll pull you back to your stand."

"Lady," said he, "I couldn't do that. If you dunno mind walking home, and will pay me for the

two hours all the same, I will be right thankful for that. I'm poorly to-day."

"Get into the chair," said I, "and I'll pull you back. I'd like to do it, for I want some exercise."

"Oh, no, no!" said he. "That would be a sin; and besides I was engaged to pull you two hours, and I must be paid for that."

"Get into that chair," I said, "and I'll pay you for your two hours and give you a shilling besides."

He looked at me for a minute, and then he got into the chair, and I shut him up.

"Now, lady," said he, "you can pull me a little way if you want exercise, and as soon as you are tired you can stop, and I'll get out, but you must pay me the extra shilling all the same."

"All right," said I, and taking hold of the handle I started off. It was real fun; the bath-chair rolled along beautifully, and I don't believe the old man weighed much more than my Corinne when I used to push her about in her baby carriage. We were in a back street, where there was hardly anybody; and as for Jone and his bath-chair, I could just see them ever so far ahead, so I started to catch up, and as the street was pretty level now I soon got going at a fine rate. I hadn't had a bit of good exercise for a long time, and this warmed me up and made me feel gay.

We was not very far behind Jone when the man began to call to me in a sort of frightened fashion, as

"STOP, LADY, AND I'LL GET OUT"

if he thought I was running away. "Stop, lady!" he said; "we are getting near the gardens, and the people will laugh at me. Stop, lady, and I'll get out." But I didn't feel a bit like stopping; the idea had come into my head that it would be jolly to beat Jone. If I could pass him and sail on ahead for a little while, then I'd stop and let my old man get out and take his bath-chair home. I didn't want it any more.

Just as I got close up behind Jone, and was about to make a rush past him, his man turned into a side street. Of course I turned too, and then I put on steam, and, giving a laugh as I turned around to look at Jone, I charged on, intending to stop in a minute and have some fun in hearing what Jone had to say about it; but you may believe, ma'am, that I was amazed when I saw only a little way in front of me the bath-chair stand where we had hired our machines! And all the bath-chair men were standing there with their mouths wide open, staring at a woman running along the street, pulling an old bath-chair man in a bath-chair! For a second I felt like dropping the handle I held and making a rush for the front door of the hotel, which was right ahead of me; and then I thought, as now I was in for it, it would be a lot better to put a good face on the matter, and not look as if I had done anything I was ashamed of, and so I just slackened speed and came up in fine style at the door of the Old Hall. Four

or five of the bath-chair men came running across the street to know if anything had happened to the old party I was pulling, and he got out looking as ashamed as if he had been whipped by his wife.

"It's a lark, mates," said he; "the lady's to pay me two shillings extra for letting her pull me."

"Two shillings?" said I. "I only promised you one."

"That would be for pulling me a little way," he said; "but you pulled me all the way back, and I couldn't do it for less than two shillings."

Jone now came up and got out quick.

"What's the meaning of all this, Pomona?" said he.

"Meaning?" said I. "Look at that dilapidated old bag of bones. He wasn't fit to pull me, and so I thought it would be fun to pull him; but, of course, I didn't know when I turned the corner I would be here at the stand."

Jone paid the men, including the two extra shillings, and when we went up to our room he said, "The next time we go out in two bath-chairs, I am going to have a chain fastened to yours, and I'll have hold of the other end of it."

Letter Number Eighteen

BUXTON

I HAVE begun to take the baths. There really is so little to do in this place that I couldn't help it, and so, while Jone was off tending to his hot soaks, I thought I might as well try the thing myself. At any rate it would fill up the time when I was alone. I find I like this sort of bathing very much, and I wish I had begun it before. It reminds me of a kind of medicine for colds that you used to make for me, madam, when I first came to the canal-boat. It had lemons and sugar in it, and it was so good I remember I used to think that I would like to go into a lingering consumption, so that I could have it three times a day, until I finally passed away like a lily on a snowbank.

Jone's been going about a good deal in a bath-chair, and doesn't mind my walking alongside of him. He says it makes him feel easier in his mind, on the whole.

Mr. Poplington came two or three days ago, and he is stopping at our hotel. We three have hired a carriage together two or three times and have taken drives into the country. Once we went to an inn, the Cat and Fiddle, about five miles away, on a high

bit of ground called Axe Edge. It is said to be the highest tavern in England, and it's lucky that it is, for that's the only recommendation it's got. The sign in front of the house has on it a cat on its hind-legs playing a fiddle, with a look on its face as if it was saying, "It's pretty poor, but it's the best I can do for you."

Inside is another painting of a cat playing a fiddle, and truly that one might be saying, "Ha! Ha! You thought that that picture on the sign was the worst picture you ever saw in your life, but now you see how you are mistaken."

Up on that high place you get the rain fresher than you do in Buxton, because it hasn't gone so far through the air, and it's mixed with more chilly winds than anywhere else in England, I should say. But everybody is bound to go to the Cat and Fiddle at least once, and we are glad we have been there, and that it is over. I like the places near the town a great deal better, and some of them are very pretty. One day we two and Mr. Poplington took a ride on top of a stage to see Haddon Hall and Chatsworth.

Haddon Hall is to me like a dream of the past come true. Lots of other old places have seemed like dreams, but this one was right before my eyes, just as it always was. Of course, you must have read all about it, madam, and I am not going to tell it over again. But think of it; a grand old

baronial mansion, part of it built as far back as the eleven hundreds, and yet in good condition and fit to live in. That is what I thought as I walked through its banqueting hall and courts and noble chambers. "Why," said I to Jone, "in that kitchen our meals could be cooked; at that table we could eat them; in these rooms we could sleep; in these gardens and courts we could roam; we could actually live here!" We haven't seen any other romance of the past that we could say that about, and to this minute it puzzles me how any duke in this world could be content to own a house like this and not live in it. But I suppose he thinks more of water-pipes and electric lights than he does of the memories of the past and time-hallowed traditions.

As for me, if I had been Dorothy Vernon, there's no man on earth, not even Jone, that could make me run away from such a place as Haddon Hall. They show the stairs down which she tripped with her lover when they eloped; but if it had been me, it would have been up those stairs I would have gone. Mr. Poplington didn't agree a bit with me about the joy of living in this enchanting old house, and neither did Jone, I am sure, although he didn't say so much. But then, they are both men, and when it comes to soaring in the regions of romanticism you must not expect too much of men.

After leaving Haddon Hall, which I did back-

ward, the coach took us to Chatsworth, which is a different sort of a place altogether. It is a grand palace, at least it was built for one, but now it is an enormous show place, bright and clean and sleek, and when we got there we saw hundreds of visitors waiting to go in. They was taken through in squads of about fifty, with a man to lead them, which he did very much as if they was a drove of cattle.

The man who led our squad made us step along lively, and I must say that never having been in a drove before, Jone and I began to get restive long before we got through. As for the show, I like the British Museum a great deal better. There is ever so much more to see there, and you have time to stop and look at things. At Chatsworth they charge you more, give you less, and treat you worse. When it came to taking us through the grounds, Jone and I struck. We left the gang we was with, and being shown where to find a gate out of the place, we made for that gate and waited until our coach was ready to take us back to Buxton.

It is a lot of fun going to the theatre here. It doesn't cost much, and the plays are good and generally funny, and a rheumatic audience is a very jolly one. The people seemed glad to forget their backs, their shoulders, and their legs, and they are ready to laugh at things that are only half comic,

and keep up a lively chattering between the acts. It's fun to see them when the play is over. The bath-chairs that have come after some of them are brought right into the building, and are drawn up just like carriages after the theatre. The first time we went I wanted Jone to stop a while and see if we didn't hear somebody call out, "Mrs. Barchester's bath-chair stops the way!" but he said I expected too much, and would not wait.

We sit about so much in the gardens, which are lively when it is clear, and not bad even in a little drizzle, that we've got to know a good many of the people; and although Jone's a good deal given to reading, I like to sit and watch them and see what they are doing.

When we first came here I noticed a good-looking young woman who was hauled about in a bath-chair, generally with an open book in her lap, which she never seemed to read much, because she was always gazing around as if she was looking for something. Before long I found out what she was looking for, for every day, sooner or later, generally sooner, there came along a bath-chair with a good-looking young man in it. He had a book in his lap too, but he was never reading it when I saw him, because he was looking for the young woman; and as soon as they saw each other they began to smile, and as they passed they always said something, but didn't stop. I wondered why they didn't give

their pullers a rest and have a good talk if they knew each other, but before long I noticed not very far behind the young lady's bath-chair was always another bath-chair with an old gentleman in it with a bottle-nose. After a while I found out that this was the young lady's father, because sometimes he would call to her and have her stop, and then she generally seemed to get some sort of a scolding.

Of course, when I see anything of this kind going on, I can't help taking one side or the other, and as you may well believe, madam, I wouldn't be likely to take that of the old bottle-nosed man's side. I had not been noticing these people for more than two or three days when one morning, when Jone and me was sitting under an umbrella, for there was a little more rain than common, I saw these two young people in their bath-chairs, coming along side by side, and talking just as hard as they could. At first I was surprised, but I soon saw how things was: the old gentleman couldn't come out in the rain. It was plain enough from the way these two young people looked at each other that they was in love, and although it most likely hurt them just as much to come out into the rain as it would the old man, love is all-powerful, even over rheumatism.

Pretty soon the clouds cleared away without notice, as they do in this country, and it wasn't long before I saw, away off, the old man's bath-chair coming along lively. His bottle-nose was sticking

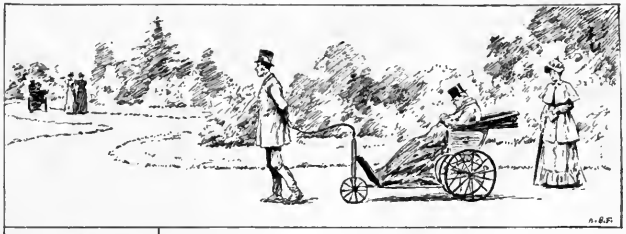
up in the air, and he was looking from one side to the other as hard as he could. The two lovers had turned off to the right and gone over a little bridge and I couldn't see them; but by the way that old nose shook as it got nearer and nearer to me, I saw they had reason to tremble, though they didn't know it.

When the old father reached the narrow path he did not turn down it, but kept straight on, and I breathed a sigh of deep relief. But the next instant I remembered that the broad path turned not far beyond, and that the little one soon ran into it, and so it could not be long before the father and the lovers would meet. I like to tell Jone everything I am going to do, when I am sure that he'll agree with me that it is right; but this time I could not bother with explanations, and so I just told him to sit still for a minute, for I wanted to see something, and I walked after the young couple as fast as I could. When I got to them, for they hadn't gone very far, I passed the young woman's bath-chair, and then I looked around and I said to her, "I beg your pardon, miss, but there is an old gentleman looking for you; but as I think he is coming round this way, you'll meet him if you keep on this path." "Oh, my!" said she unintentionally; and then she thanked me very much, and I went on and turned a corner and went back to Jone, and pretty soon the young man's bath-chair passed us going toward the

gate, he looking three-quarters happy, and the other quarter disappointed, as lovers are if they don't get the whole loaf.

From that day until yesterday, which was a full week, I came into the gardens every morning, sometimes even when Jone didn't want to come, because I wanted to see as much of this love business as I could. For my own use in thinking of them I named the young man Pomeroy and the young woman Angelica, and as for the father, I called him Snortfrizzle, being the worst name I could think of at the time. But I must wait until my next letter to tell you the rest of the story of the lovers, and I am sure you will be as much interested in them as I was.

Letter Number Nineteen



BUXTON

I HAVE a good many things to tell you, for we leave Buxton to-morrow, but I will first finish the story of Angelica and Pomeroy. I think the men who pulled the bath-chairs of the lovers knew pretty much how things was going, for whenever they got a chance they brought their chairs together, and I often noticed them looking out for the old father, and if they saw him coming they would move away from each other if they happened to be together.

If Snortfrizzle's puller had been one of the regular bath-chair men they might have made an agreement with him so that he would have kept away from them; but he was a man in livery, with a high hat, who walked very regular, like a high-stepping horse,

and who, it was plain enough to see, never had anything to do with common bath-chair men. Old Snortfrizzle seemed to be smelling a rat more and more—that is, if it is proper to liken Cupid to such an animal—and his nose seemed to get purpler and purpler. I think he would always have kept close to Angelica's chair if it hadn't been that he had a way of falling asleep, and whenever he did this his man always walked very slow, being naturally lazy. Two or three times I have seen Snortfrizzle wake up, shout to his man, and make him trot around a clump of trees and into some narrow path where he thought his daughter might have gone.

Things began to look pretty bad, for the old man had very strong suspicions about Pomeroy, and was so very wide awake when he was awake, that I knew it couldn't be long before he caught the two together, and then I didn't believe that Angelica would ever come into these gardens again.

It was yesterday morning that I saw old Snortfrizzle with his chin down on his shirt bosom, snoring so steady that his hat heaved, being very slowly pulled along a shady walk, and then I saw his daughter, who was not far ahead of him, turn into another walk, which led down by the river. I knew very well that she ought not to turn into that walk, because it didn't in any way lead to the place where Pomeroy was sitting in his bath-chair behind a great clump of bushes and flowers, with his face filled with

the most lively emotions, but overspread ever and anon by a cloudlet of despair on account of the approach of the noontide hour, when Angelica and Snortfrizzle generally went home.

The time was short, and I believed that love's young dream must be put off until the next day if Angelica could not be made aware where Pomeroy

"Your brother is over there"

was sitting, or Pomeroy where Angelica was going; so I got right up and made a short cut down a steep little path, and, sure enough, I met her when I got to the bottom. "I beg your pardon very much, miss," said I, "but your brother is over there in the entrance to the cave, and I think he has been looking for you." "My brother?" said she, turning as red as her ribbons was blue. "Oh, thank

you very much! Robertson, you may take me that way."

It wasn't long before I saw those two bath-chairs alongside of each other, and covered from general observation by masses of blooming shrubbery. As I had been the cause of bringing them together I thought I had a right to look at them a little while, as that would be the only reward I'd be likely to get, and so I did it. It was as I thought; things was coming to a climax; the bath-chair men standing with much consideration with their backs to their vehicles, and, united for the time being by their clasped hands, the lovers grew tender to a degree which I would have fain checked, had I been nearer, for fear of notice by passers-by.

But now my blood froze within my veins. I would never have believed that a man in a high hat and livery a size too small for him could run, but Snortfrizzle's man did, and at a pace which ought to have been prohibited by law. I saw him coming from an unsuspected quarter, and swoop around that clump of flowers and foliage. Regardless of consequences I approached nearer. There was loud voices; there was exclamations; there was a rattling of wheels; there was the sundering of tender ties!

In a moment Pomeroy, who had backed off but a little way, began to speak, but his voice was drowned in the thunder of Snortfrizzle's denunciations. Angelica wept, and her head fell upon her

lovely bosom, and I am sure I heard her implore her man to remove her from the scene. Pomeroy remained, his face firm, his eyes undaunted, but Snortfrizzle shook his fist in unison with his nose, and, hurling an anathema at him, followed his daughter, probably to incarcerate her in her apartments.

All was over, and I returned to Jone with a heavy heart and faltering step. I could not but feel that I had brought about the sad end of this tender chapter in the lives of Pomeroy and Angelica. If I had let them alone they would not have met and they would not have been discovered together. I didn't tell Jone what had happened, because he does not always sympathize with me in my interest in others, and for hours my heart was heavy.

It was about a half an hour before dinner that day when I thought that a little walk might raise my spirits, and I wandered into the gardens, for which we each have a weekly ticket, and there, to my amazement, not far from the gate I saw Angelica in tears and her bath-chair. Her man was not with her, and she was alone. When she saw me she looked at me for a minute, and then she beckoned to me to come to her. I flew. There were but few people in the gardens, and we was alone.

"Madam," said she, "I think you must be very kind. I believe you knew that gentleman was not my brother. He is not."

"My dear miss," said I—I was almost on the point of calling her Angelica—"I knew that. I know that he is something nearer and dearer than even a brother."

She blushed. "Yes," said she, "you are right, and we are in great trouble."

"Oh, what is it? Tell me quick. What can I do to help you?"

"My father is very angry," said she, "and has forbidden me ever to see him again, and he is going to take me home to-morrow. But we have agreed to fly together to-day. It is our only chance, but he is not here. Oh, dear! I do not know what I shall do."

"Where are you going to fly to?" said I.

"We want to take the Edinburgh train this evening if there is one," she said, "and we get off at Carlisle, and from there it is only a little way to Gretna Green."

"Gretna Green!" I cried. "Oh, I will help you! I will help you! Why isn't the gentleman here, and where has he gone?"

"He has gone to see about the trains," she said, almost crying, "and I don't see what keeps him. I could not get away until father went into his room to dress for dinner, and as soon as he is ready he will call for me. Where can he be? I have sent my man to look for him."

"Oh, I'll go look for him! You wait here," I

cried, forgetting that she would have to, and away I went.

As I was hurrying out of the gates of the gardens I looked in the direction of the railroad station, and there I saw Pomeroy pulled by one bath-chair man and the other one talking to him. In twenty bounds I reached him. "Go back for your young lady," I cried to Robertson, Angelica's man, "and bring her here on the run. She sent me for you." Away went Robertson, and then I said to the astonished Pomeroy, "Sir, there is no time for explanations. Your lady-love will be with you in a minute. My husband and I are going to Edinburgh to-morrow, and I have looked up all the trains. There is one which leaves here at twenty minutes past six. If she comes soon you will have time to catch it. Have you your baggage ready?"

He looked at me as if he wondered who on earth I was, but I am sure he saw my soul in my face and trusted me.

"Yes," he said, "she has a little bag in her bath-chair, and mine is here."

"Here she comes," said I, "and you must fly to the station."

In a moment Angelica was with us, her face beaming with delight.

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" she cried, but I would not listen to her gratitude. "Hurry!" I said, "or you will be too late. Joy go with you."

They hastened off, and I walked back to the gardens. I looked at my watch, and to my horror I saw it was five minutes past six. Fifteen minutes left yet. Fifteen minutes in which they might be overtaken. I stopped for a moment irresolutely. What should I do? I thought of running after them to the station. I thought in some way I might help them—buy their tickets or do something. But while I was thinking I heard a rattle, and down the street came the man in livery, and Snortfrizzle's bottle-nose like a volcano behind him. The minute they reached me, and there was nobody else in the street, the old man shouted, "Hi! Have you seen two bath-chairs with a young man and a young woman in them?"

I was on the point of saying No, but changed my mind like a flash. "Did the young lady wear a hat with blue ribbons?" I asked.

"Yes!" he roared. "Which way did they go?"

"And did the young man with her wear eye-glasses and a brown moustache?"

"With her, was he?" screamed Snortfrizzle. "That's the rascal. Which way did they go? Tell me instantly."

When I was a very little girl I knew an old woman who told me that if a person was really good at heart, the holy angels would allow that person, in the course of her life, twelve fibs without charge, provided they was told for the good of somebody

TO THE CAT AND FIDDLE

and not to do harm. Now at such a moment as this I could not remember how many fibs of that kind I had left over to my credit, but I knew there must be at least one, and so I didn't hesitate a second. "They have gone to the Cat and Fiddle," said I. "I heard them tell their bath-chair men so, as they urged them forward at the top of their speed. They stopped for a second here, sir, and I heard the gentleman send a cabman for a clergyman, post haste, to meet them at the Cat and Fiddle."

If the sky had been lighted up by the eruption of Snortfrizzle's nose I should not have been surprised.

"The fools! They can't! Cat and Fiddle! But they can't be half way there. Martin, to the Cat and Fiddle!"

The man touched his hat. "But I couldn't do that, sir. I couldn't run to the Cat and Fiddle. It's long miles, sir. Shall I get a carriage?"

"Carriage!" cried the old man, and then he began to look about him.

Horror struck me. Perhaps they would go to the station for one! Just then a boy driving a pony and a grocery cart came up.

"There you are, sir," I cried. "Hire that boy to tow you. Your butler can sit in the back of the cart and hold the handle of your bath-chair. It may take long to get a carriage, and the cart will go much faster. You may overtake them in a mile."

Old Snortfrizzle never so much as thanked me or looked at me. He yelled to the boy in the cart, offered him ten shillings and sixpence to give him a tow, and in less time than I could take to write it, that flunky with a high hat was sitting in the tail of the cart, the pony was going at full gallop, and the old man's bath-chair was spinning on behind it at a great rate.

I did not leave that spot—standing statue-like and looking along both roads—until I heard the rumble of the departing train, and then I repaired to the Old Hall, my soul uplifted. I found Jone in an awful fluster about my being out so late; but I do stay pretty late sometimes when I walk by myself, and so he hadn't anything new to say.

Letter Number Twenty

EDINBURGH

WE have been here five or six days now, but the first thing I must write is the rest of the story of the lovers. We left Buxton the next day after their flight, and I begged Jone to stop at Carlisle and let us make a little trip to Gretna Green. I wanted to see the place that has been such a well-spring of matrimonial joys, and besides, I thought we might find Pomeroy and Angelica still there.

I had not seen old Snortfrizzle again, but late that night I had heard a row in the hotel, and I expect it was him back from the Cat and Fiddle. Whether he was inquiring for me or not I don't know, or what he was doing, or what he did.

Jone thought I had done a good deal of meddling in other people's business, but he agreed to go to Gretna Green, and we got there in the afternoon. I left Jone to take a smoke at the station, because I thought this was a business it would be better for me to attend to myself, and I started off to look up the village blacksmith and ask him if he had lately wedded a pair; but, will you believe it, madam, I had not gone far on the main road of the village when, a little ahead of me, I saw two bath-chairs

coming toward me, one of them pulled by Robertson, and the other by Pomeroy's man, and in these two chairs was the happy lovers, evidently Mr. and Mrs.! Their faces was filled with light enough to take a photograph, and I could almost see their hearts swelling with transcendent joy. I hastened toward them, and in an instant our hands was clasped as if we had been old friends.

They told me their tale. They had reached the station in plenty of time, and Robertson had got a carriage for them, and he and the other man had gone with them third class, with the bath-chairs in the goods carriages. They had reached Gretna Green that morning, and had been married two hours. Then I told my tale. The eyes of both of them was dimmed with tears, hers the most, and again they clasped my hands. "Poor father," said Angelica, "I hope he didn't go all the way to the Cat and Fiddle, and that the night air didn't strike into his joints; but he cannot separate us now." And she looked confiding at the other bath-chair.

"What are you going to do?" said I, and they said they had just been making plans. I saw, though, that their minds was in too exalted a state to do this properly for themselves, and so I reflected a minute. "How long have you been in Buxton?"

"I have been there two weeks and two days," said she, "and my husband"—oh, the effulgence

that filled her countenance as she said this—"has been there one day longer."

"Then," said I, "my advice to you is to go back to Buxton and stay there five days, until you both have taken the waters and the baths for the full three weeks. It won't be much to bear the old gentleman's upbraiding for five days, and then, blessed with health and love, you can depart. No matter what you do afterward, I'd stick it out at Buxton for five days."

"We'll do it," said they; and then, after more gratitude and congratulations, we parted.

And now I must tell you about ourselves. When Jone had been three weeks at Buxton, and done all the things he ought to do, and hadn't done anything he oughtn't to do, he hadn't any more rheumatism in him than a squirrel that jumps from bough to bough. But will you believe it, madam, I had such a rheumatism in one side and one arm that it made me give little squeaks when I did up my back hair, and it all came from my taking the baths when there wasn't anything the matter with me; for I found out, but all too late, that while the waters of Buxton will cure rheumatism in people that's got it, they will bring it out in people who never had it at all. We was told that we ought not to do anything in the bathing line without the advice of a doctor; but those little tanks in the floors of the bathrooms, all lined with tiles and filled with warm,

transparent water, that you went down into by marble steps, did seem so innocent, that I didn't believe there was no need in asking questions about them. Jone wanted me to stay three weeks longer until I was cured, but I wouldn't listen to that. I was wild to get to Scotland, and as my rheumatism did not hinder me from walking, I didn't mind what else it did.

And there is another thing I must tell you. One day when I was sitting by myself on The Slopes waiting for Jone, about lunch time, and with a reminiscence floating through my mind of the Devonshire clotted cream of the past, never perhaps to return, I saw an elderly woman coming along, and when she got near she stopped and spoke. I knew her in an instant. She was the old body we met at the Babylon Hotel, who told us about the cottage at Chedcombe. I asked her to sit down beside me and talk, because I wanted to tell her what good times we had had, and how we liked the place, but she said she couldn't, as she was obliged to go on.

"And did you like Chedcombe?" said she. "I hope you and your husband kept well."

I said yes, except Jone's rheumatism, we felt splendid; for my aches hadn't come on then, and I was going on to gush about the lovely country she had sent us to, but she didn't seem to want to listen.

"Really," said she, "and your husband had the

rheumatism. It was a wise thing for you to come here. We English people have reason to be proud of our country. If we have our banes, we also have our antidotes; and it isn't every country that can say that, is it?"

I wanted to speak up for America, and tried to

"And did you like Chedcombe?"

think of some good antidote with the proper banes attached; but before I could do it she gave her head a little wag, and said, "Good morning; nice weather, isn't it?" and wobbled away. It struck me that the old body was a little lofty, and just then Mr. Poplington, who I hadn't noticed, came up.

"Really," said he, "I didn't know you was acquainted with the Countess."

"The which?" said I.

"The Countess of Mussleby," said he, "that you was just talking to."

"Countess!" I cried. "Why, that's the old person who recommended us to go to Chedcombe."

"Very natural," said he, "for her to do that, for her estates lie south of Chedcombe, and she takes a great interest in the villages around about, and knows all the houses to let."

I parted from him and wandered away, a sadness stealing o'er my soul. Gone with the recollections of the clotted cream was my visions of diamond tiaras, tossing plumes, and long folds of brocades and laces sweeping the marble floors of palaces. If ever again I read a novel with a countess in it, I shall see the edge of a yellow flannel petticoat and a pair of shoes like two horse-hair bags, which was the last that I saw of this thunderbolt into the middle of my visions of aristocracy.

Jone and me got to like Buxton very much. We met many pleasant people, and as most of them had a chord in common, we was friendly enough. Jone said it made him feel sad in the smoking-room to see the men he'd got acquainted with get well and go home, but that's a kind of sadness that all parties can bear up under pretty well.

I haven't said a word yet about Scotland, though

we have been here a week, but I really must get something about it into this letter. I was saying to Jone the other day that if I was to meet a king with a crown on his head I am not sure that I should know that king if I saw him again, so taken up would I be with looking at his crown, especially if it had jewels in it such as I saw in the regalia at the Tower of London. Now Edinburgh seems to strike me in very much the same way. Prince Street is its crown, and whenever I think of this city it will be of this magnificent street and the things that can be seen from it.

It is a great thing for a street to have one side of it taken away and sunk out of sight so that there is a clear view far and wide, and visitors can stand and look at nearly everything that is worth seeing in the whole town, as if they was in the front seats of the balcony in a theatre, and looking on the stage. You know I am very fond of the theatre, madam, but I never saw anything in the way of what they call spectacular representation that came near Edinburgh as seen from Prince Street.

But as I said in one of my first letters, I am not going to write about things and places that you can get much better description of in books, and so I won't take up any time in telling how we stand at the window of our room at the Royal Hotel, and look out at the Old Town standing like a forest of tall houses on the other side of the valley, with the

great castle perched up high above them, and all the hills and towers and the streets all spread out below us, with Scott's monument right in front, with everybody he ever wrote about standing on brackets, which stick out everywhere from the bottom up to the very top of the monument, which is higher than the tallest house, and looks like a steeple without a church to it. It is the most beautiful thing of the kind I ever saw, and I have made out, or think I have, nearly every one of the figures that's carved on it.

I think I shall like the Scotch people very much, but just now there is one thing about them that stands up as high above their other good points as the castle does above the rest of the city, and that is the feeling they have for anybody who has done anything to make his fellow-countrymen proud of him. A famous Scotchman cannot die without being pretty promptly born again in stone or bronze, and put in some open place with seats convenient for people to sit and look at him. I like this; glory ought to begin at home.

Letter Number Twenty-one

EDINBURGH

JONE being just as lively on his legs as he ever was in his life, thanks to the waters of Buxton, and I having the rheumatism now only in my arm, which I don't need to walk with, we have gone pretty much all over Edinburgh, and a great place it is to walk in, so far as variety goes. Some of the streets are so steep you have to go up steps if you are walking, and about a mile around if you are driving. I never get tired wandering about the Old Town with its narrow streets and awfully tall houses, with family washes hanging out from every story.

The closes are queer places. They are very like little villages set into the town as if they was raisins in a pudding. You get to them by alleys or tunnels, and when you are inside you find a little neighborhood that hasn't anything more to do with the next close, a block away, than one country village has with another.

We went to see John Knox's house, and although Mr. Knox was pretty hard on vanities and frivolities, he didn't mind having a good house over his head, with woodwork on the walls and ceilings

that wasn't any more necessary than the back buttons on his coat.

We have been reading hard since we have been in Edinburgh, and whenever Mr. Knox and Mary Queen of Scots come together, I take Mary's side without asking questions. I have no doubt Mr. Knox was a good man, but if meddling in other people's business gave a person the right to have a monument, the top of his would be the first thing travellers would see when they come near Edinburgh.

When we went to Holyrood Palace it struck me that Mary Queen of Scots deserved a better house. Of course, it wasn't built for her, but I don't care very much for the other people who lived in it. The rooms are good enough for an ordinary household's use, although the little room that she had her supper party in when Rizzio was killed, wouldn't be considered by Jone and me as anything like big enough for our family to eat in. But there is a general air about the place as if it belonged to a royal family that was not very well off, and had to abstain from a good deal of grandeur.

If Mary Queen of Scots could come to life again, I expect the Scotch people would give her the best palace that money could buy, for they have grown to think the world of her, and her pictures blossom out all over Edinburgh like daisies in a pasture field.

The first morning after we got here I was as much surprised as if I had met Mary Queen of Scots walking along Prince Street with a parasol over her head. We were sitting in the reading-room of the hotel, and on the other side of the room was a long desk at which people was sitting, writing letters, all with their backs to us. One of these was a young man wearing a nice light-colored sack coat, with a shiny white collar sticking above it, and his black derby hat was on the desk beside him. When he had finished his letter he put a stamp on it and got up to mail it. I happened to be looking at him, and I believe I stopped breathing as I sat and stared. Under his coat he had on a little skirt of green plaid about big enough for my Corinne when she was about five years old, and then he didn't wear anything whatever until you got down to his long stockings and low shoes. I was so struck with the feeling that he was an absent-minded person that I punched Jone and whispered to him to go quick and tell him. Jone looked at him and laughed, and said that was the Highland costume.

Now if that man had had his martial plaid wrapped around him, and had worn a Scottish cap with a feather in it and a long ribbon hanging down his back, with his claymore girded to his side, I wouldn't have been surprised; for this is Scotland, and that would have been like the pictures I have

seen of Highlanders. But to see a man with the upper half of him dressed like a clerk in a dry goods store and the lower half like a Highland chief, was enough to make a stranger gasp.

But since then I have seen a good many young men dressed that way. I believe it is considered the tip of the fashion. I haven't seen any of the bare-legged dandies yet with a high silk hat and an umbrella, but I expect it won't be long before I meet one. We often see the Highland soldiers that belong to the garrison at the castle, and they look mighty fine with their plaid shawls and their scarfs and their feathers; but to see a man who looks as if one half of him belonged to London Bridge and the other

"Jone looked at him, and said that was the Highland costume"

half to the Highland moors, does look to me like a pretty bad mixture.

I am not so sure, either, that the whole Highland dress isn't better suited to Egypt, where it doesn't often rain, than to Scotland. Last Saturday we was at St. Giles's Church, and the man who took us around told us we ought to come early next morning and see the military service, which was something very fine; and as Jone gave him a shilling he said he would be on hand and watch for us, and give us a good place where we could see the soldiers come in. On Sunday morning it rained hard, but we was both at the church before eight o'clock, and so was a good many other people, but the doors was shut and they wouldn't let us in. They told us it was such a bad morning that the soldiers could not come out, and so there would be no military service that day. I don't know whether those fine fellows thought that the colors would run out of their beautiful plaids, or whether they would get rheumatism in their knees; but it did seem to me pretty hard that soldiers could not come out in the weather that lots of common citizens didn't seem to mind at all. I was a good deal put out, for I hate to get up early for nothing, but there was no use saying anything, and all we could do was to go home, as all the other people with full suits of clothes did.

Jone and I have got so much more to see before

we go home, that it is very well we are both able to skip around lively. Of course there are ever and ever so many places that we want to go to, but can't do it, but I am bound to see the Highlands and the country of the "Lady of the Lake." We have been reading up Walter Scott, and I think more than I ever did that he is perfectly splendid. While we was in Edinburgh we felt bound to go and see Melrose Abbey and Abbotsford. I shall not say much about these two places, but I will say that to go into Sir Walter Scott's library and sit in the old armchair he used to sit in, at the desk he used to write on, and see his books and things around me, gave me more a feeling of reverentialism than I have had in any cathedral yet.

As for Melrose Abbey, I could have walked about under those towering walls and lovely arches until the stars peeped out from the lofty vaults above; but Jone and the man who drove the carriage were of a different way of thinking, and we left all too soon. But one thing I did do: I went to the grave of Michael Scott the wizard, where once was shut up the book of awful mysteries, with a lamp always burning by it, though the flagstone was shut down tight on top of it, and I got a piece of moss and a weed. We don't do much in the way of carrying off such things, but I want Corinne to read the "Lady of the Lake," and then I shall give her that moss and that weed, and tell where I got them. I

believe that, in the way of romantics, Corinne is going to be more like me than like Jone.

To-morrow we go to the Highlands, and we shall leave our two big trunks in the care of the man in the red coat, who is commander-in-chief at the Royal Hotel, and who said he would take as much care of them as if they was two glass jars filled with rubies; and we believed him, for he has done nothing but take care of us since we came to Edinburgh, and good care, too.

Letter Number Twenty-two

KINLOCH RANNOCH.

IT happened that the day we went north was a very fine one, and as soon as we got into the real Highland country there was nothing to hinder me from feeling that my feet was on my native heath, except that I was in a railway carriage, and that I had no Scotch blood in me, but the joy of my soul was all the same. There was an old gentleman got into our carriage at Perth, and when he saw how we was taking in everything our eyes could reach, for Jone is a good deal more fired up by travel than he used to be—I expect it must have been the Buxton waters that made the change—he began to tell us all about the places we were passing through. There didn't seem to be a rock or a

stream that hadn't a bit of history to it for that old gentleman to tell us about.

We got out at a little town called Struan, and then we took a carriage and drove across the wild moors and hills for thirteen miles till we came to this village at the end of Loch Rannoch. The wind blew strong and sharp, but we knew what we had to expect, and had warm clothes on. And with the cool breeze, and remembering "Scots wha ha' wi' Wallace bled," it made my blood tingle all the way.

We are going to stay here at least a week. We shall not try to do everything that can be done on Scottish soil, for we shall not stalk stags or shoot grouse; and I have told Jone that he may put on as many Scotch bonnets and plaids as he likes, but there is one thing he is not going to do, and that is to go bare-kneed, to which he answered, he would never do that unless he could dip his knees into weak coffee so that they would be the same color as his face.

There is a nice inn here with beautiful scenery all around, and the lovely Loch Rannoch stretches away for eleven miles. Everything is just as Scotch as it can be. Even the English people who come here put on knickerbockers and bonnets. I have never been anywhere else where it is considered the correct thing to dress like the natives, and I will say here that it is very few of the natives that wear

kilts. That sort of thing seems to be given up to the fancy Highlanders.

Nearly all the talk at the inn is about shooting and fishing. Stag-hunting here is very different from what it is in England in more ways than one. In the first place, stags are not hunted with horses and hounds. In the second place, the sport is not free. A gentleman here told Jone that if a man wanted to shoot a stag on these moors it would cost him one rifle cartridge and six five-pound notes; and when Jone did not understand what that meant, the man went on and told him about how the deer-stalking was carried on here. He said that some of the big proprietors up here owned as much as ninety thousand acres of moor-land, and they let it out mostly to English people for hunting and fishing. And if it is stag-hunting the tenant wants, the price he pays is regulated by the number of stags he has the privilege of shoot-ing. Each stag he is allowed to kill costs him thirty pounds. So if he wants the pleasure of shoot-ing thirty stags in the season, his rent will be nine hundred pounds. This he pays for the stag-shoot-ing, but some kind of a house and about ten thousand acres are thrown in, which he has a perfect right to sit down on and rest himself on, but he can't shoot a grouse on it unless he pays extra for that. And, what is more, if he happens to be a bad shot, or breaks his leg and has to

stay in the house, and doesn't shoot his thirty stags, he has got to pay for them all the same.

When Jone told me all this, I said I thought a hundred and fifty dollars a pretty high price to pay for the right to shoot one deer. But Jone said I didn't consider all the rest the man got. In the first place, he had the right to get up very early in the morning, in the gloom and drizzle, and to trudge through the slop and the heather until he got far away from the neighborhood of any human being, and then he could go up on some high piece of ground and take a spyglass and search the whole country round for a stag. When he saw one way off in the distance snuffing the morning air, or hunting for his breakfast among the heather, he had the privilege of walking two or three miles over the moor so as to get that stag between the wind and himself, so that it could not scent him or hear him. Then he had the glorious right to get his rifle all ready, and steal and creep toward that stag to cut short his existence. He has to be as careful and as sneaky as if he was a snake in the grass, going behind little hills and down into gullies, and sometimes almost crawling on his stomach where he goes over an open place, and doing everything he can to keep that stag from knowing his end is near. Sometimes he follows his victim all day, and the sun goes down before he has the glorious right of standing up and lodging a bullet in its unsuspecting heart.

"So you see," said Jone, "he gets a lot for his hundred and fifty dollars."

"They do get a good deal more for their money than I thought they did," said I; "but I wonder if those rich sportsmen ever think that if they would take the money that they pay for shooting thirty or forty stags in one season, they might buy a rhinoceros, which they could set up on a hill and shoot at every morning if they liked. A game animal like that would last them for years, and if they ever felt like it, they could ask their friends to help them shoot without costing them anything."

Jone is pretty hard on sport with killing in it. He does not mind eating meat, but he likes to have the butcher do the killing. But I reckon he is a little too tender-hearted. But, as for me, I like sport of some kinds, especially when you don't have your pity or your sympathies awakened by seeing your prey enjoying life when you are seeking to encompass his end. Of course, by that I mean fishing.

There are a good many trout in the lake, and people can hire the privilege of fishing for them; and I begged Jone to let me go out in a boat and fish. He was rather in favor of staying ashore and fishing in the little river, but I didn't want to do that. I wanted to go out and have some regular lake fishing. At last Jone agreed, provided I would not expect him to have anything to do with the

fishing. "Of course I don't expect anything like that," said I; "and it would be a good deal better for you to stay on shore. The landlord says a gilly will go along to row the boat and attend to the lines and rods and all that, and so there won't be any need for you at all, and you can stay on shore with your book, and watch if you like."

"And suppose you tumble overboard," said Jone.

"Then you can swim out," I said, "and perhaps wade a good deal of the way. I don't suppose we need go far from the bank."

Jone laughed, and said he was going too.

"Very well," said I; "but you have got to stay in the bow, with your back to me, and take an interesting book with you, for it is a long time since I have done any fishing, and I am not going to do it with two men watching me and telling me how I ought to do it and how I oughtn't to. One will be enough."

"And that one won't be me," said Jone, "for fishing is not one of the branches I teach in my school."

I would have liked it better if Jone and me had gone alone, he doing nothing but row; but the landlord wouldn't let his boat that way, and said we must take a gilly, which, as far as I can make out, is a sort of sporting farmhand. That is the way to do fishing in these parts.

Well, we started, and Jone sat in the front, with

his back to me, and the long-legged gilly rowed like a good fellow. When we got to a good place to fish he stopped, and took a fishing-rod that was in pieces and screwed them together, and fixed the line all right so that it would run along the rod to a little wheel near the handle, and then he put on a couple of hooks with artificial flies on them, which was so small I couldn't imagine how the fish could see them. While he was doing all this I got a little fidgety, because I had never fished except with a straight pole and line with a cork to it, which would bob when the fish bit; but this was altogether a different sort of a thing. When it was all ready he handed me the pole, and then sat down very polite to look at me.

Now, if he had handed me the rod, and then taken another boat and gone home, perhaps I might have known what to do with the thing after a while, but I must say that at that minute I didn't. I held the rod out over the water and let the flies dangle down into it, but do what I would, they wouldn't sink; there wasn't weight enough on them.

"You must throw your fly, madam," said the gilly, always very polite. "Let me give it a throw for you," and then he took the rod in his hand and gave it a whirl and a switch which sent the flies out ever so far from the boat; then he drew it along a little, so that the flies skipped over the top of the water.

"I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING, AND TAKING THE POLE IN BOTH HANDS I GAVE IT A WILD TWIRL OVER MY HEAD"

I didn't say anything, and taking the pole in both hands I gave it a wild twirl over my head, and then it flew out as if I was trying to whip one of the leaders in a four-horse team. As I did this Jone gave a jump that took him pretty near out of the boat, for two flies swished just over the bridge of his nose, and so close to his eyes as he was reading an interesting dialogue, and not thinking of fish or even of me, that he gave a jump sideways, which, if it hadn't been for the gilly grabbing him, would have taken him overboard. I was frightened myself, and said to him that I had told him he ought not to come in the boat, and it would have been a good deal better for him to have stayed on shore.

He didn't say anything, but I noticed he turned up his collar and pulled down his hat over his eyes and ears. The gilly said that perhaps I had too much line out, and so he took the rod and wound up a good deal of the line. I liked this better, because it was easier to whip out the line and pull it in again. Of course, I would not be likely to catch fish so much nearer the boat, but then we can't have everything in this world. Once I thought I had a bite, and I gave the rod such a jerk that the line flew back against me, and when I was getting ready to throw it out again, I found that one of the little hooks had stuck fast in my thumb. I tried to take it out with the other hand, but it

was awfully awkward to do, because the rod wobbled and kept jerking on it. The gilly asked me if there was anything the matter with the flies, but I didn't want him to know what had happened, and so I said, "Oh, no," and turning my back on him I tried my best to get the hook out without his helping me, for I didn't want him to think that the first thing I caught was myself, after just missing my husband—he might be afraid it would be his turn next. You cannot imagine how bothersome it is to go fishing with a gilly to wait on you. I would rather wash dishes with a sexton to wipe them and look for nicks on the edges.

At last—and I don't know how it happened—I did hook a fish, and the minute I felt him I gave a jerk, and up he came. I heard the gilly say something about playing, but I was in no mood for play, and if that fish had been shot up out of the water by a submarine volcano it couldn't have ascended any quicker than when I jerked it up. Then as quick as lightning it went whirling through the air, struck the pages of Jone's book, turning over two or three of them, and then wiggled itself half way down Jone's neck, between his skin and his collar, while the loose hook swung around and nipped him in his ear.

"Don't pull, madam," shouted the gilly, and it was well he did, for I was just on the point of giving an awful jerk to get the fish loose from Jone.

Jone gave a grab at the fish, which was trying to get down his back, and pulling him out threw him down; but by doing this he jerked the other hook into his ear, and then a yell arose such as I never before heard from Jone. "I told you you ought not to come in this boat," said I; "you don't like fishing, and something is always happening to you."

"Like fishing!" cried Jone. "I should say not," and he made up such a comical face that even the gilly, who was very polite, had to laugh as he went to take the hook out of his ear.

When Jone and the fish had been got off my line, Jone turned to me and said, "Are you going to fish any more?"

"Not with you in the boat," I answered; and then he said he was glad to hear that, and told the man he could row us ashore.

I can assure you, madam, that fishing in a rather wobbly boat with a husband and a gilly in it, is not to my taste, and that was the end of our sporting experiences in Scotland, but it did not end the glorious times we had by that lake and on the moors.

We hired a little pony trap and drove up to the other end of the lake, and not far beyond that is the beginning of Rannoch Moor, which the books say is one of the wildest and most desolate places in all Europe. So far as we went over the moor

we found that this was truly so, and I know that I, at least, enjoyed it ever so much more because it was so wild and desolate. As far as we could see, the moors stretched away in every direction, covered in most places by heather, now out of blossom, but with great rocks standing out of the ground in some places, and here and there patches of grass. Sometimes we could see four or five lochs at once, some of them two or three miles long, and down through the middle of the moor came the maddest and most harum-scarum little river that could be imagined. It actually seemed to go out of its way to find rocks to jump over, just as if it was a young calf, and some of the waterfalls were beautiful. All around us was melancholy mountains, all of them with "Ben" for their first names, except Schiehallion, which was the best shaped of any of them, coming up to a point and standing by itself, which was what I used to think mountains always did; but now I know they run into each other so that you can hardly tell where one ends and the other begins.

For three or four days we went out on these moors, sometimes when the sun was shining, and sometimes when there was a heavy rain and the wind blew gales, and I think I liked this last kind of weather the best, for it gave me an idea of lonely desolation which I never had in any part of the world I have ever been in before. There is often

not a house to be seen, not even a crofter's hut, and we seldom met anybody. Sometimes I wandered off by myself behind a hillock or rocks where I could not even see Jone, and then I used to try to imagine how Eve would have felt if she had early

Pomona drinking it in

become a widow, and to put myself in her place. There was always clouds in the sky, sometimes dark and heavy ones coming down to the very peaks of the mountains, and not a tree was to be seen, except a few rowan trees or bushes close to

the river. But by the side of Lock Rannoch, on our way back to the village, we passed along the edge of a fine old forest called the "Black Woods of Rannoch." There are only three of these ancient forests left in Scotland, and some of the trees in this one are said to be eight hundred years old.

The last time we was out on the Rannoch Moor there was such a savage and driving wind, and the rain came down in such torrents, that my mackintosh was blown nearly off of me, and I was wet from my head to my heels. But I would have stayed out hours longer if Jone had been willing, and I never felt so sorry to leave these Grampian Hills, where I would have been glad to have had my father feed his flocks, and where I might have wandered away my childhood, barefooted over the heather, singing Scotch songs and drinking in deep draughts of the pure mountain air, instead of—but no matter.

To-morrow we leave the Highlands, but as we go to follow the shallop of the "Lady of the Lake," I should not repine.

Letter Number Twenty-three

OBAN, SCOTLAND

IT would seem to be the easiest thing in the world, when looking on the map, to go across the country from Loch Rannoch over to Katrine and all those celebrated parts, but we found we could not go that way, and so we went back to Edinburgh and made a fresh start. We stopped one night at the Royal Hotel, and there we found a letter from Mr. Poplington. We had left him at Buxton, and he said he was not going to Scotland this season, but would try to see us in London before we sailed.

He is a good man, and he wrote this letter on purpose to tell me that he had had a letter from his friend, the clergyman in Somersetshire, who had

forbidden the young woman whose wash my tricycle had run into to marry her lover because he was a Radical. This letter was in answer to one Mr. Poplington wrote to him, in which he gave the minister my reasons for thinking that the best way to convert the young man from Radicalism was to let him marry the young woman, who would be sure to bring him around to her way of thinking, whatever that might be.

I didn't care about the Radicalism. All I wanted was to get the two married, and then it would not make the least difference to me what their politics might be; if they lived properly and was sober and industrious and kept on loving each other, I didn't believe it would make much difference to them. It was a long letter that the clergyman wrote, but the point of it was, that he had concluded to tell the young woman that she might marry the fellow if she liked, and that she must do her best to make him a good Conservative, which, of course, she promised to do. When I read this I clapped my hands, for who could have suspected that I should have the good luck to come to this country to spend the summer and make two matches before I left it!

When we left Edinburgh to gradually wend our way to this place, which is on the west coast of Scotland, the first town we stopped at was Stirling, where the Scotch kings used to live. Of course we went to the castle, which stands on the rocks high

above the town; but before we started to go there Jone inquired if the place was a ruin or not, and when he was told it was not, and that soldiers lived there, he said it was all right, and we went. He now says he must positively decline to visit any more houses out of repair. He is tired of them; and since he has got over his rheumatism he feels less like visiting ruins than he ever did. I tell him the ruins are not any more likely to be damp than a good many of the houses that people live in; but this didn't shake him, and I suppose if we come to any more vine-covered and shattered remnants of antiquity I shall be obliged to go over them by myself.

The castle is a great place, which I wouldn't have missed for the world; but the spot that stirred my soul the most was in a little garden, as high in the air as the top of a steeple, where we could look out over the battlefield of Bannockburn. Besides this, we could see the mountains of Ben-Lomond, Ben-Venue, Ben-A'an, Benledi, and ever so much Scottish landscape spreading out for miles upon miles. There is a little hole in the wall here called the Ladies' Look-Out, where the ladies of the court could sit and see what was going on in the country below without being seen themselves, but I stood up and took in everything over the top of the wall.

I don't know whether I told you that the mountains of Scotland are "Bens," and the mouths

of rivers are "abers," and islands are "inches." Walking about the streets of Stirling, and I didn't have time to see half as much as I wanted to, I came to the shop of a "flesher." I didn't know what it was until I looked into the window and saw that it was a butcher shop.

I like a language just about as foreign as the Scotch is. There are a good many words in it that people not Scotch don't understand, but that gives a person the feeling that she is travelling abroad, which I want to have when I am abroad. Then, on the other hand, there are not enough of them to hinder a traveller from making herself understood. So it is natural for me to like it ever so much better than French, in which, when I am in it, I simply sink to the bottom if no helping hand is held out to me.

I had some trouble with Jone that night at the hotel, because he had a novel which he had been reading for I don't know how long, and which he said he wanted to get through with before he began anything else. But now I told him he was going to enter on the wonderful country of the "Lady of the Lake," and that he ought to give up everything else and read that book, because if he didn't go there with his mind prepared the scenery would not sink into his soul as it ought to. He was of the opinion that when my romantic feeling got on top of the scenery it would be likely to sink

into his soul as deep as he cared to have it, without any preparation, but that sort of talk wouldn't do for me. I didn't want to be gliding o'er the smooth waters of Loch Katrine, and have him asking me who the girl was who rowed her shallop to the silver strand, and the end of it was that I made him sit up until a quarter of two o'clock in the morning while I read the "Lady of the Lake" to him. I had read it before and he had not, but I hadn't got a quarter through before he was just as willing to listen as I was to read. And when I got through I was in such a glow that Jone said he believed that all the blood in my veins had turned to hot Scotch.

I didn't pay any attention to this, and after going to the window and looking out at the Gaelic moon, which was about half full and rolling along among the clouds, I turned to Jone and said, "Jone, let's sing 'Scots wha ha',' before we go to bed."

"If we do roar out that thing," said Jone, "they will put us out on the curbstone to spend the rest of the night."

"Let's whisper it, then," said I; "the spirit of it is all I want. I don't care for the loudness."

"I'd be willing to do that," said Jone, "if I knew the tune and a few of the words."

"Oh, bother!" said I; and when I got into bed I drew the clothes over my head and sang that brave song all to myself. Doing it that way the words

and tune didn't matter at all, but I felt the spirit of it, and that was all I wanted, and then I went to sleep.

The next morning we went to Callander by train, and there we took a coach for Trossachs. It is hardly worth while to say we went on top, because the coaches here haven't any inside to them, except a hole where they put the baggage. We drove along a beautiful road with mountains and vales and streams, and the driver told us the name of everything that had a name, which he couldn't help very well, being asked so constant by me. But I didn't feel altogether satisfied, for we hadn't come to anything quotable, and I didn't like to have Jone sit too long without something happening to stir up some of the "Lady of the Lake" which I had pumped into his mind the day before, and so keep it fresh.

Before long, however, the driver pointed out the ford of Coilantogle. The instant he said this I half jumped up, and, seizing Jone by the arm, I cried, "Don't you remember? This is the place where the Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James, fought Roderick Dhu!" And then without caring who else heard me, I burst out with:

> "'His back against a rock he bore,
> And firmly placed his foot before:
> "Come one, come all! This rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I."'"

"No, madam," said the driver, politely touching his hat, "that was a mile farther on. This place is:

> "'And here his course the chieftain staid,
> Threw down his target and his plaid.'"

"You are right," said I; and then I began again:

> "'Then each at once his falchion drew,
> Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
> Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,
> As what they ne'er might see again;
> Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
> In dubious strife they darkly closed.'"

I didn't repeat any more of the poem, though everybody was listening quite respectful without thinking of laughing, and as for Jone, I could see by the way he sat and looked about him that his tinder had caught my spark; but I knew that the thing for me to do here was not to give out but take in, and so, to speak in figures, I drank in the whole of Lake Vannachar, as we drove along its lovely marge until we came to the other end, and the driver said we would now go over the Brigg of Turk. At this up I jumped and said:

> "'And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
> The headmost horseman rode alone.'"

I had sense enough not to quote the next two lines, because when I had read them to Jone he said that it was a shame to use a horse that way.

We now came to Loch Achray, at the other end

of which is the Trossachs, where we stopped for the night, and when the driver told me the mountain we saw before us was Ben-Venue, I repeated the lines:

> " ' The hunter marked that mountain high,
> The lone lake's western boundary,
> And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
> Where that huge rampart barr'd the way.' "

At last we reached the Trossachs Hotel, which stands near the wild ravines filled with bristling woods where the stag was lost, with the lovely lake in front and Ben-Venue towering up on the other side. I was so excited I could scarcely eat, and no wonder, because for the greater part of the day I had breathed nothing but the spirit of Scott's poetry. I forgot to say that from the time we left Callander until we got to the hotel the rain poured down steadily, but that didn't make any difference to me. A human being soaked with the "Lady of the Lake" is rain-proof.

Letter Number Twenty-four

EDINBURGH

I WAS sorry to stop my last letter right in the middle of the "Lady of the Lake" country, but I couldn't get it all in, and the fact is, I can't get all I want to say in any kind of a letter. The things I have seen and want to write about are crowded together like the Scottish mountains.

On the day after we got to Trossachs Hotel, and I don't know any place I would rather spend weeks at than there, Jone and I walked through the "darksome glen" where the stag,

> "Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
> In the deep Trossachs' wildest nook
> His solitary refuge took."

And then we came out on the far-famed Loch Katrine. There was a little steamboat there to take passengers to the other end, where a coach was waiting, but it wasn't time for that to start, and we wandered on the banks of that song-gilded piece of water. It didn't lie before us like "one burnished sheet of living gold," as it appeared to James Fitz-James, but my soul could supply the sunset if I chose. There, too, was the island of the fair Ellen,

and beneath our very feet was the "silver strand" to which she rowed her shallop. I am sorry to say there isn't so much of the silver strand as there used to be, because, in this world, as I have read, and as I have seen, the spirit of realistics is always crowding and trampling on the toes of the romantics, and the people of Glasgow have actually laid water-pipes from their town to this lovely lake, and now they turn the faucets in their back kitchens and out spouts the tide which kissed

> "With whispering sound and slow
> The beach of pebbles bright as snow."

This wouldn't have been so bad, because the lake has enough and to spare of its limpid wave; but in order to make their water-works the Glasgow people built a dam, and that has raised the lake a good deal higher, so that it overflows ever so much of the silver strand. But I can pick out the real from a scene like that as I can pick out and throw away the seeds of an orange, and gazing o'er that enchanted scene I felt like the Knight of Snowdoun himself, when he first beheld the lake and said:

> "How blithely might the bugle horn
> Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!"

and then I went on with the lines until I came to

> "Blithe were it then to wander here!
> But now—beshrew yon nimble deer"—

"You'd better beshrew that steamboat bell," said Jone, and away we went and just caught the boat. Realistics come in very well sometimes when they take the form of legs.

The steamboat took us over nearly the whole of Lake Katrine, and I must say that I was so busy fitting verses to scenery that I don't remember whether it rained or the sun shone. When we left the boat we took a coach to Inversnaid on Loch Lomond, and, as we rode along, it made my heart almost sink to feel that I had to leave my poetry behind me, for I didn't know any that suited this region. But when we got in sight of Loch Lomond a Scotch girl who was on the seat behind me, and had several friends with her, began to sing a song about Lomond, of which I only remember, "You take the high road and I'll take the low road, and I'll get to Scotland afore you."

I am sure I must have Scotch blood in me, for when I heard that song it wound up my feelings to such a pitch that I believe if that girl had been near enough I should have given her a hug and a kiss. As for Jone, he seemed to be nearly as much touched as I was, though not in the same way, of course.

We took a boat on Loch Lomond to Ardlui, another little town, and then we drove nine miles to the railroad. This was through a wild and solemn valley, and by the side of a rushing river, full of waterfalls and deep and diresome pools.

When we reached the railroad we found a train waiting, and we took it and went to Oban, which we reached about six o'clock. Even this railroad trip was delightful, for we went by the great Lake Awe, with another rushing river and mountains and black precipices. We had a carriage all to ourselves until an old lady got in at a station, and she hadn't been sitting in her corner more than ten minutes before she turned to me and said:

"You haven't any lakes like this in your country, I suppose."

Now I must say that, in the heated condition I had been in ever since I came into Scotland, a speech like that was like a squirt of cold water into a thing full of steam. For a couple of seconds my boiling stopped, but my fires was just as blazing as ever, and I felt as if I could turn them on that old woman and shrivel her up for plastering her comparisons on me at such a time.

"Of course, we haven't anything just like this," I said, "but it takes all sorts of scenery to make up a world."

"That's very true, isn't it?" said she. "But, really, one couldn't expect in America such a lake as that, such mountains, such grandeur!"

Now I made up my mind if she was going to keep up this sort of thing Jone and me would change carriages when we stopped at the next station, for comparisons are very different from

poetry, and if you try to mix them with scenery you make a mess that is not fit for a Christian. But I thought first I would give her a word back:

"I have seen to-day," I said, "the loveliest scenery I ever met with; but we've got grand cañons in America where you could put the whole of that scenery without crowding, and where it wouldn't be much noticed by spectators, so busy would they be gazing at the surrounding wonders."

"Fancy!" said she.

"I don't want to say anything," said I, "against what I have seen to-day, and I don't want to think of anything else while I am looking at it; but this I will say, that landscape with Scott is very different from landscape without him."

"That is very true, isn't it?" said she; and then she stopped making comparisons, and I looked out of the window.

Oban is a very pretty place on the coast, but we never should have gone there if it had not been the place to start from for Staffa and Iona. When I was only a girl I saw pictures of Fingal's Cave, and I have read a good deal about it since, and it is one of the spots in the world that I have been longing to see, but I feel like crying when I tell you, madam, that the next morning there was such a storm that the boat for Staffa didn't even start; and as the people told us that the storm would most likely last two or three days, and that the sea for a few days

more would be so rough that Staffa would be out of the question, we had to give it up, and I was obliged to fall back from the reality to my imagination. Jone tried to comfort me by telling me that he would be willing to bet ten to one that my fancy would soar a mile above the real thing, and that perhaps it was very well I didn't see old Fingal's Cave and so be disappointed.

"Perhaps it is a good thing," said I, "that you didn't go, and that you didn't get so seasick that you would be ready to renounce your country's flag and embrace Mormonism if such things would make you feel better." But that is the only thing that is good about it, and I have a cloud on my recollection which shall never be lifted until Corinne is old enough to travel and we come here with her.

But although the storm was so bad, it was not bad enough to keep us from making our water trip to Glasgow, for the boat we took did not have to go out to sea. It was a wonderfully beautiful passage we made among the islands and along the coast, with the great mountains on the mainland standing up above everything else. After a while we got to the Crinan Canal, which is in reality a short cut across the field. It is nine miles long and not much wider than a good-sized ditch, but it saves more than a hundred miles of travel around an island. We was on a sort of a toy steamboat which went its way through the fields and bushes and grass so

close we could touch them; and as there was eleven locks where the boat had to stop, we got out two or three times and walked along the banks to the next lock. That being the kind of a ride Jone likes, he blessed Buxton. At the other end of the canal we took a bigger steamboat which carried us to Glasgow.

In the morning it hailed, which afterward turned to rain, but in the afternoon there was only showers now and then, so that we spent most of the time on deck. On this boat we met a very nice Englishman and his wife, and when they had heard us speak to each other they asked us if we had ever been in this part of the world before, and when we said we hadn't they told us about the places we passed. If we had been an English couple who had never been there before they wouldn't have said a word to us.

As we got near the Clyde the gentleman began to talk about ship-building, and pretty soon I saw in his face plain symptoms that he was going to have an attack of comparison making. I have seen so much of this disorder that I can nearly always tell when it is coming on a person. In about a minute the disease broke out on him, and he began to talk about the differences between American and English ships. He told Jone and me about a steamship that was built out in San Francisco which shook three thousand bolts out of herself on her first voyage. It seemed to me that that was a good

deal like a codfish shaking his bones out through swimming too fast. I couldn't help thinking that that steamship must have had a lot of bolts so as to have enough left to keep her from scattering herself over the bottom of the ocean.

I expected Jone to say something in behalf of his country's ships, but he didn't seem to pay much attention to the boat story, so I took up the cudgels myself, and I said to the gentleman that all nations, no matter how good they might be at shipbuilding, sometimes made mistakes, and then to make a good impression on him I whanged him over the head with the "Great Eastern," and asked him if there ever was a vessel that was a greater failure than that.

He said, "Yes, yes, the 'Great Eastern' was not a success," and then he stopped talking about ships.

When we got fairly into the Clyde and near Glasgow the scene was wonderful. It was nearly night, and the great fires of the factories lit up the sky, and we saw on the stocks a great ship being built.

We stayed in Glasgow one day, and Jone was delighted with it, because he said it was like an American city. Now, on principle, I like American cities, but I didn't come to Scotland to see them; and the greatest pleasure I had in Glasgow was standing with a tumbler of water in my hand, repeating to myself as much of the "Lady of the Lake" as I could remember.

Letter Number Twenty-five

LONDON

HERE we are in this wonderful town, where, if you can't see everything you want to see, you can generally see a sample of it, even if your fad happens to be the ancientnesses of Egypt. We are at the Babylon Hotel, where we shall stay until it is time to start for Southampton, where we shall take the steamer for home. What we are going to do between here and Southampton I don't know yet; but I do know that Jone is all on fire with joy because he thinks his journeys are nearly over, and I am chilled with grief when I think that my journeys are nearly over.

We left Edinburgh on the train called the "Flying Scotsman," and it deserved its name. I suppose that in the days of Wallace and Bruce and Rob Roy the Scots must often have skipped along in a lively way; but I am sure if any of them had ever invaded England at the rate we went into it, the British lion would soon have been living on thistles instead of roses.

The speed of this train was sometimes a mile a minute, I think; and I am sure I was never on any railroad in America where I was given a shorter

time to get out for something to eat than we had at York. Jone and I are generally pretty quick about such things, but we had barely time to get back to our carriage before that "Flying Scotsman" went off like a streak of lightning.

On the way we saw a part of York Minster, and had a splendid view of Durham Cathedral, standing high in the unreachable—that is, as far as I was concerned. Peterborough Cathedral we also saw the outside of, and I felt like a boy looking in at a confectioner's window with no money to buy anything. It wasn't money that I wanted; it was time, and we had very little of that left.

The next day, after we reached London, I set out to attend to a piece of business that I didn't want Jone to know anything about. My business was to look up my family pedigree. It seemed to me that it would be a shame if I went away from the home of my ancestors without knowing something about those ancestors and about the links that connected me with them. So I determined to see what I could do in the way of making up a family tree.

By good luck, Jone had some business to attend to about money and rooms on the steamer, and so forth, and so I could start out by myself without his even asking me where I was going. Now, of course, it would be a natural thing for a person to go and seek out his ancestors in the ancient village from which they sprang, and to read their names on

"A PERSON WHO WAS A FAMILY-TREE-MAN"

the tombstones in the venerable little church, but as I didn't know where this village was, of course I couldn't go to it. But in London is the place where you can find out how to find out such things.

As far back as when we was in Chedcombe I had had a good deal of talk with Miss Pondar about ancestors and families. I told her that my forefathers came from this country, which I was very sure of, judging from my feelings; but as I couldn't tell her any particulars, I didn't go into the matter very deep. But I did say there was a good many points that I would like to set straight, and asked her if she knew where I could find out something about English family trees. She said she had heard there was a big heraldry office in London, but if I didn't want to go there, she knew of a person who was a family-tree-man. He had an office in London, and his business was to go around and tend to trees of that kind which had been neglected, and to get them into shape and good condition. She gave me his address, and I had kept the thing quiet in my mind until now.

I found the family-tree-man, whose name was Brandish, in a small room not too clean, over a shop not far from St. Paul's Churchyard. He had another business, which related to patent poison for flies, and at first he thought I had come to see him about that, but when he found out I wanted to ask him about my family tree his face brightened up.

When I told Mr. Brandish my business the first thing he asked me was my family name. Of course I had expected this, and I had thought a great deal about the answer I ought to give. In the first place, I didn't want to have anything to do with my father's name. I never had anything much to do with him, because he died when I was a little baby, and his name had nothing high-toned about it, and it seemed to me to belong to that kind of a family that you would be better satisfied with the less you looked up its beginnings; but my mother's family was a different thing. Nobody could know her without feeling that she had sprung from good roots. It might have been from the stump of a tree that had been cut down, but the roots must have been of no common kind to send up such a shoot as she was. It was from her that I got my longings for the romantic.

She used to tell me a good deal about her father, who must have been a wonderful man in many ways. What she told me was not like a sketch of his life, which I wish it had been, but mostly anecdotes of what he said and did. So it was my mother's ancestral tree I determined to find, and without saying whether it was on my mother's or father's side I was searching for ancestors, I told Mr. Brandish that Dork was the family name.

"Dork," said he; "a rather uncommon name,

isn't it? Was your father the eldest son of a family of that name?"

Now I was hoping he wouldn't say anything about my father.

"No, sir," said I; "it isn't that line that I am looking up. It is my mother's. Her name was Dork before she was married."

"Really! Now I see," said he, "you have the paternal line all correct, and you want to look up the line on the other side. That is very common; it is so seldom that one knows the line of ancestors on one's maternal side. Dork, then, was the name of your maternal grandfather."

It struck me that a maternal grandfather must be a grandmother, but I didn't say so.

"Can you tell me," said he, "whether it was he who emigrated from this country to America, or whether it was his father or his grandfather?"

Now I hadn't said anything about the United States, for I had learned there was no use in wasting breath telling English people I had come from America, so I wasn't surprised at his question, but I couldn't answer it.

"I can't say much about that," I said, "until I have found out something about the English branches of the family."

"Very good," said he. "We will look over the records," and he took down a big book and turned to the letter D. He ran his finger down two

or three pages, and then he began to shake his head.

"Dork?" said he. "There doesn't seem to be any Dork, but here is Dorkminster. Now if that was your family name we'd have it all here. No doubt you know all about that family. It's a grand old family, isn't it? Isn't it possible that your grandfather or one of his ancestors may have dropped part of the name when he changed his residence to America?"

Now I began to think hard; there was some reason in what the family-tree-man said. I knew very well that the same family name was often different in different countries, changes being made to suit climates and people.

"Minster has a religious meaning, hasn't it?" said I.

"Yes, madam," said he; "it relates to cathedrals and that sort of thing."

Now, so far as I could remember, none of the things my mother had ever told me about her father was in any ways related to religion. They was mostly about horses; and although there is really no reason for the disconnection between horses and religion, especially when you consider the hymns with heavenly chariots in them must have had horses, it didn't seem to me that my grandfather could have made it a point of being religious, and perhaps he mightn't have cared for

the cathedral part of his name, and so might have dropped it for convenience in signing, probably being generally in a hurry, judging from what my mother had told me. I said as much to Mr. Brandish, and he answered that he thought it was likely enough, and that that sort of thing was often done.

"Now, then," said he, "let us look into the Dorkminster line and trace out your connection with that. From what place did your ancestors come?"

It seemed to me that he was asking me a good deal more than he was telling me, and I said to him: "That is what I want to find out. What is the family home of the Dorkminsters?"

"Oh, they were a great Hampshire family," said he. "For five hundred years they lived on their estates in Hampshire. The first of the name was Sir William Dorkminster, who came over with the Conqueror, and most likely was given those estates for his services. Then we go on until we come to the Duke of Dorkminster, who built a castle, and whose brother Henry was made bishop and founded an abbey, which I am sorry to say doesn't now exist, being totally destroyed by Oliver Cromwell."

You cannot imagine how my blood leaped and surged within me as I listened to those words. William the Conqueror! An ancestral abbey! A duke! "Is the family castle still standing?" said I.

"It fell into ruins," said he, "during the reign of Charles I., and even its site is now uncertain, the park having been devoted to agricultural purposes. The fourth Duke of Dorkminster was to have commanded one of the ships which destroyed the Spanish Armada, but was prevented by a mortal fever which cut him off in his prime; he died without issue, and the estates passed to the Culverhams of Wilts."

"Did that cut off the line?" said I, very quick.

"Oh, no," said the family-tree man, "the line went on. One of the duke's younger sisters must have married a man on condition that he took the old family name, which is often done, and her descendants must have emigrated somewhere, for the name no longer appears in Hampshire; but probably not to America, for that was rather early for English emigration."

"Do you suppose," said I, "that they went to Scotland?"

"Very likely," said he, after thinking a minute; "that would be probable enough. Have you reason to suppose that there was a Scotch branch in your family?"

"Yes," said I, for it would have been positively wrong in me to say that the feelings that I had for the Scotch hadn't any meaning at all.

"Now then," said Mr. Brandish, "there you are, madam. There is a line all the way down from the

Conqueror to the end of the sixteenth century, scarcely one man's lifetime before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock."

I now began to calculate in my mind. I was thirty years old; my mother, most likely, was about as old when I was born; that made sixty years. Then my grandfather might have been forty when my mother was born, and there was a century. As for my great-grandfather and his parents, I didn't know anything about them. Of course, there must have been such persons, but I didn't know where they came from or where they went to.

"I can go back a century," said I, "but that doesn't begin to meet the end of the line you have marked out. There's a gap of about two hundred years."

"Oh, I don't think I would mind that," said Mr. Brandish. "Gaps of that kind are constantly occurring in family trees. In fact, if we was to allow gaps of a century or so to interfere with the working out of family lines, it would cut off a great many noble ancestries from families of high position, especially in the colonies and abroad. I beg you not to pay any attention to that, madam."

My nerves was tingling with the thought of the Spanish Armada, and perhaps Bannockburn (which then made me wish I had known all this before I went to Stirling, but which battle, now as I write,

I know must have been fought a long time before any of the Dorks went to Scotland), and I expect my eyes flashed with family pride, for do what I would I couldn't sit calm and listen to what I was hearing. But, after all, that two hundred years did weigh upon my mind. "If you make a family tree for me," said I, "you will have to cut off the trunk and begin again somewhere up in the air."

"Oh, no," said he, "we don't do that. We arrange the branches so that they overlap each other, and the dotted lines which indicate the missing portions are not noticed. Then, after further investigation and more information, the dots can be run together and the tree made complete and perfect."

Of course, I had nothing more to say, and he promised to send me the tree the next morning, though, of course, requesting me to pay him in advance, which was the rule of the office, and you would be amazed, madam, if you knew how much that tree cost. I got it the next morning, but I haven't shown it to Jone yet. I am proud that I own it, and I have thrills through me whenever my mind goes back to its Norman roots; but I am bound to say that family trees sometimes throw a good deal of shade over their owners, especially when they have gaps in them, which seems contrary to nature, but is true to fact.

Letter Number Twenty-six

SOUTHWESTERN HOTEL, SOUTHAMPTON

TO-MORROW our steamer sails, and this is the last letter I write on English soil; and although I haven't done half that I wanted to, there are ever so many things I have done that I can't write you about.

I had seen so few cathedrals that on the way down here I was bound to see at least one good one, and so we stopped at Winchester. It was while walking under the arches of that venerable pile that the thought suddenly came to me that we were now in Hampshire, and that, perhaps, in this cathedral might be some of the tombs of my ancestors. Without saying what I was after I began at one of the doors, and I went clean around that enormous church, and read every tablet in the walls and on the floor.

Once I had a shock. There was a good many small tombs with roofs over them, and statues of people buried within, lying on top of the tombs, and some of them had their faces and clothes colored so as to make them look almost as natural as life. They was mostly bishops, and had been lying there for centuries. While looking at these I

came to a tomb with an opening low down on the side of it, and behind some iron bars there lay a stone figure that made me fairly jump. He was on his back with hardly any clothes on, and was actually nothing but skin and bones. His mouth was open, as if he was gasping for his last breath. I never saw such an awful sight, and as I looked at the thing my blood began to run cold, and then it froze. The freezing was because I suddenly thought to myself that this might be a Dorkminster, and that that horrible object was my ancestor. I was actually afraid to look at the inscription on the tombstone for fear that this was so, for if it was, I knew that whenever I should think of my family tree this bag of bones would be climbing up the trunk, or sitting on one of the branches. But I must know the truth, and trembling so that I could scarcely read, I stooped down to look at the inscription and find

"This might be a Dorkminster"

out who that dreadful figure had been. It was not a Dorkminster, and my spirits rose.

We got here three days ago, and we have made a visit to the Isle of Wight. We went straight down to the southern coast, and stopped all night at the little town of Bonchurch. It was very lovely down there with roses and other flowers blooming out-of-doors as if it was summer, although it is now getting so cold everywhere else. But what pleased me most was to stand at the top of a little hill, and look out over the waters of the English Channel, and feel that not far out of eyeshot was the beautiful land of France with its lower part actually touching Italy.

You know, madam, that when we was here before, we was in France, and a happy woman was I to be there, although so much younger than now I couldn't properly enjoy it; but even then France was only part of the road to Italy, which, alas, we never got to. Some day, however, I shall float in a gondola and walk amid the ruins of ancient Rome, and if Jone is too sick of travel to go with me, it may be necessary for Corinne to see the world, and I shall take her.

Now I must finish this letter and bid good-by to beautiful Britain, which has made us happy and treated us well in spite of some comparisons in which we was expected to be on the wrong side, but which hurt nobody, and which I don't want even to think of at such a moment as this

Letter Number Twenty-seven

NEW YORK

I SEND you this, madam, to let you know that we arrived here safely yesterday afternoon, and that we are going to-day to Jone's mother's farm where Corinne is.

I liked sailing from Southampton because when I start to go to a place I like to go, and when we went home before and had to begin by going all the way up to Liverpool by land, and then coming all the way back again by water, and after a couple of days of this to stop at Queenstown and begin the real voyage from there, I did not like it, although it was a good deal of fun seeing the bumboat women come aboard at Queenstown and telescope themselves into each other as they hurried up the ladder to get on deck and sell us things.

We had a very good voyage, with about enough rolling to make the dining saloon look like some of the churches we've seen abroad on weekdays where there was services regular, but mighty small congregations.

When we got in sight of my native shore, England, Scotland, and even the longed-for Italy, with

her palaces and gondolas, faded from my mind, and my every fibre tingled with pride and patriotism. We reached our dock about six o'clock in the afternoon, and I could scarcely stand still, so anxious was I to get ashore. There was a train at eight which reached Rockbridge at half-past nine, and there we could take a carriage and drive to the farm in less than an hour, and then Corinne would be in my arms, so you may imagine my state of mind—Corinne before bedtime! But a cloud blacker than the heaviest fog came down upon me, for while we was standing on the deck, expecting every minute to land, a man came along and shouted at the top of his voice that no baggage could be examined by the custom-house officers after six o'clock, and the passengers could take nothing ashore with them but their hand-bags, and must come back in the morning and have their baggage examined. When I heard this my soul simply boiled within me! I looked at Jone, and I could see he was boiling just as bad.

"Jone," said I, "don't say a word to me."

"I am not going to say a word," said he, and he didn't. All our belongings was in our trunks. Jone didn't carry any hand-bag, and I had only a little one which had in it three newspapers, which we bought from the pilot, a tooth-brush, a spool of thread and some needles, and a pair of scissors with one point broken off. With these things we had

to go to a hotel and spend the night, and in the morning we had to go back to have our trunks examined, which, as there was nothing in them to pay duty on, was waste time for all parties, no matter when it was done.

"Jone didn't carry any hand-bag, and I had only a little one"

That night, when I was lying awake thinking about this welcome to our native land, I don't say that I hauled down the stars and stripes, but I did put them at half mast. When we arrived in England we got ashore about twelve o'clock at night,

but there was the custom-house officers as civil and obliging as any people could be, ready to tend to us and pass us on. And when I thought of them, and afterward of the lordly hirelings who met us here, I couldn't help feeling what a glorious thing it would be to travel if you could get home without coming back.

Jone tried to comfort me by telling me that we ought to be very glad we don't like this sort of thing. "In many foreign countries," said he, "people are a good deal nagged by their governments and they like it; we don't like it, so haul up your flag."

I hauled it up, and it's flying now from the tiptop of my tallest mast. In an hour our train starts, and I shall see Corinne before the sun goes down.

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